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LIVES  
OF  
DISTINGUISHED  
AMERICAN NAVAL OFFICERS  
BY  
J. FENIMORE COOPER.



CONSTITUTION AND JAVA

PHILADELPHIA  
PUBLISHED BY CAREY AND HART.



L I V E S

OF

DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN

NAVAL OFFICERS.

BY

J. FENIMORE COOPER,

AUTHOR OF "THE SPY," "THE PILOT," &c. &c.

VOL. II.

JONES,  
WOOLSEY,

PERRY,  
DALE.

PHILADELPHIA:  
CAREY AND HART.  
1846.

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# NAVAL BIOGRAPHY.

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## JOHN PAUL JONES.

FEW names connected with the American marine have so much claim to celebrity as that of the subject of this sketch. His services were of a character so bold and romantic, the means he employed were seemingly so inadequate to the ends he had in view, and his success, on one occasion in particular, so very brilliant as to have given rise, on the part of his political and personal enemies, to much unmerited and bitter calumny, while his admirers and friends have been induced to lean a little too strongly to the side of eulogy and indiscriminating praise. As the matter of the life and character of this distinguished officer has been frequently the subject of comment in biographies, of more or less merit, within the last few years, and a great mass of evidence has been produced to remove the veil which was so long drawn before his early years, this is perhaps the time when an attempt may best be made to arrive at a just appreciation of the deeds of the officer, and the qualities of the man. In assuming this task, we shall avail ourselves of such of the best authenticated

facts that offer, reasoning for ourselves on their results and principles.

There are no longer any doubts thrown over the birth and early life of Paul Jones. His grandfather was a regular gardener, in the neighborhood of Leith, of the name of Paul. His father, John Paul, was apprenticed to the same trade, and at the expiration of his indentures he entered into the service of Mr. Craik, of Arbigland,\* in which situation he passed the remainder of his days. We have the assertion of Jones himself, that there never existed any connection between the Earl of Selkirk and his father, as has been long and generally asserted; and we may add, the present head of that noble family has assured the writer of this article that the Pauls were never in the service of his grandfather.

John Paul, the gardener of Craik, of Arbigland, married Jean Macduff, the daughter of a small farmer in the parish of New Abbey. Seven children were the fruits of this connection, two of which died in infancy. John was the youngest of the remaining five. William, the eldest of the family, left Scotland at an early age, and finally married and settled at Fredericksburg, in Virginia. He was the principal cause of subsequently attracting his distinguished brother to America. The daughters were Elizabeth, Janet, and Mary Ann. The first never married; the second became the wife of a watchmaker in Dumfries, of the name of Taylor; and the third had two husbands, the first of whom was

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\* Craik, of Arbigland, was a man of extensive scientific and literary attainments, as well as of large fortune. It may have interest with the American reader, to learn that Washington's friend and physician, Dr. James Craik, was a natural son of this gentleman.

named Young, and the second Loudon. Several of the descendants of these sisters came to America, where some of them are now living.

John, the fifth and youngest surviving child of this humble family, was born July 6th, 1747, at Arbigland, in the parish of Kirkbean, Scotland. His early education was such as marked his condition, in a country like the land of his birth. It was plain, substantial, and moral. The boy appears to have improved his limited opportunities, however, for while his taste, sentiments and language, in after-life, betray the exaggeration of an imperfect instruction, his handwriting, orthography, and principles, prove that the essentials had not been neglected. Still, the acquirements he obtained at school could not have been great, for we find him regularly apprenticed to the sea at the age of twelve. His master was a Mr. Younger, a merchant in the American trade, and a resident of Whitehaven, a port at the entrance of the Solway, in the adjoining kingdom of England.

Thus far, there was nothing unusual in the career of the boy. He neither ran away to go to sea, nor did any thing to throw a tinge of romance around this period of his life. His first voyage was to America; with which country his personal connection may be said to have commenced at the age of thirteen. The vessel in which he sailed was the *Friendship*, of Whitehaven; Benson master and her destination the *Rapahannock*. Here he found his brother William established, and, while in port, young Paul became an inmate of his house.

Jones manifested great aptitude for his profession,

and soon acquired all that portion of seamanship that is not dependent on experience and judgment; the last two being ever the work of time. The affairs of his master becoming embarrassed, however, the indentures were given up, and the lad was left to shift for himself at an age when counsel and government were the most necessary. It is a proof that young Paul was not a common youth, that there is no difficulty in tracing him through all this period of his humble career. As soon as left to his own exertions, he shipped as third mate in the *King George*, a slaver out of Whitehaven. This must have occurred about the year 1765, or when he was eighteen, as we find him, in 1766, the first mate of the *Two Friends*, of Kingston, Jamaica, a vessel in the same trade. It would seem that he made but two voyages to the coast of Africa; and his tender years, necessities, and the opinions of the day, may well prove his apology. The pursuit did not please him, and he left the *Two Friends* on her return, and sailed for Kirkcudbright as a passenger, in the *John* of that port. This circumstance proved of great importance to him, for the master and mate died of yellow fever, on the passage, when Mr. Paul assumed the direction, and carried the vessel safely to her haven. His reward was the command of the brig he had most probably been the means of saving; the vessel belonging to Currie, Beck & Co., of Kirkcudbright.

This must have occurred in the year 1767.\* Here,

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\* Since the appearance of this sketch in *Graham's Magazine*, authentic information has been communicated to the writer on various points, which has induced him to vary a little from his original statements.

then, we find our hero, the son of an humble gardener, in command of a sea-going craft, at the early age of twenty, or at that of twenty-one, at the latest. Such preferment frequently occurs in cases where connections and patronage unite to push a youth forward; but never with the obscure and unpatronized, without the existence of a high degree of merit. We want no better evidence that Paul was discreet, intelligent, industrious and worthy of respect, at that period of his life, than this single fact; merchants never trusting their property out of their reach without sending their confidence along with it. The new master also discharged the duties of supercargo; additional proof of the early stability of his character.

Our young seaman sailed but two years in this employment. He left the service of the house which had given him his first command, in consequence of its having dissolved partnership and having no further employment for him.

In our original sketch of Jones, it was stated that a prosecution for having caused the death of a certain Mungo Maxwell, while in command of the *John*, was probably connected with his quitting the employment of Currie, Beck & Co.; but the fact is denied by his friends, on seemingly good authority. As the occurrence was the foundation of much calumny against Jones, when, at a later day, the passions and interests of nations got to be connected with his character, it is necessary to relate the circumstances, which appear to have been as follows:

Jones had occasion to correct Maxwell, in the usual nautical mode, or by flogging. The punishment was

probably severe, and it is equally probable that it was merited. The man, shortly after, shipped in another vessel, called the *Barcelona Packet*, where he died in the course of a week or two, after a few days of low spirits, accompanied by fever. This occurred in June, 1770. It would seem, however, that Maxwell complained to the authorities of Tobago, in which island the parties then were, of the flogging he had received from Capt. Paul, and that the latter was summoned to appear before the judge of the vice-admiralty court to answer. A certificate of the judge is extant, in which it is stated, that Maxwell's shoulders exhibited the proofs of severe flogging, but that he dismissed the complaint as frivolous, after a hearing. The certificate adds, that the deponent, the statement being in the form of an affidavit, carefully examined the back of Maxwell, and that he has no idea the man could have died in consequence of the flogging mentioned. Another affidavit, made by the master of the *Barcelona Packet*, establishes the other facts.

The later biographers of Jones have alluded to this subject, though not always in a way that is sustained by their own proofs. Sands, the best and most logical of them all, has fallen into a leading error in his account of this affair. He appears to think that Maxwell instituted a prosecution against his commander in England, confounding the facts altogether. Maxwell died long before he could have reached England, on his passage from Tobago, where he had been flogged, to one of the Leeward Islands; nor does it appear that he ever took any legal step in the matter, beyond the complaint laid before the vice-admiralty judge. That a

prosecution for murder was menaced or instituted against Jones, is shown by one of his own letters. Capt. Mackenzie, on no visible authority, refers this prosecution to the envy of some of his neighbors and competitors of Kirkcudbright. There does not seem to be any conclusive reason, however, for supposing that the prosecution occurred anywhere but in the West Indies. It may have taken place in Great Britain, though the term "British jury," which Jones uses in connection with this affair, would apply as well to a colonial as to an English or Scottish jury. There was no trial, nor is it even certain, that there was even a formal prosecution at all; Jones' allusion to the subject being in the following words—viz. :

"I have enclosed you a copy of an affidavit, made before Governor Young by the judge of the court of vice-admiralty, at Tobago, by which you will see with how little reason my life has been thirsted after, and, which is much dearer to me, my honor, by maliciously loading my fair character with obloquy and vile aspersions. I believe there are few who are hard-hearted enough to think I have not long since given the world every satisfaction in my power, being conscious of my innocence before Heaven, who will one day judge even my judges. I staked my honor, life, and fortunes for six long months on the verdict of a British jury, notwithstanding I was sensible of the general prejudices which ran against me; but, after all, none of my accusers had the courage to confront me. Yet I am willing to convince the world, if reason and facts will do it, that they have had no foundation for their harsh treatment," &c.

This language was probably used by a man who remained openly within reach of the law, for six months, inviting by his presence a legal investigation of charges that involved a felony, without any legal steps having been commenced. The precise facts are of less importance, as it is now reasonably certain that Maxwell did not die in consequence of the flogging he received from Jones; for could a case have been made out against the latter, it is not probable it would have been abandoned altogether, when enmity was so active and prejudice so general. Nor is it material where this persecution was practiced, his subsequent career proving that our subject was by no means deserving of the character of an officer failing of humanity. The occurrence, notwithstanding, appears to have embittered several of the earlier years of Jones' life; to have made an impression against him in his native country, and to have contributed to induce him to abandon Scotland; his last visit to that country, except as an enemy, taking place in 1771. Jones left the employment of Currie, Beck & Co., April 1, 1771, and remained in Scotland until near the close of that year.

On quitting Scotland, Jones repaired to London, where he assumed the command of a ship called the *Betsey*, which was also engaged in the West India trade. In this vessel he remained until the year 1773, when he was induced to relinquish his command, in order to proceed to Virginia, where his brother William had recently died, and to whose estate he was an heir. This call upon his services and time was probably sudden and imperative, as he subsequently complains much of the losses he suffered, in consequence of hav-



ing left his affairs in Tobago in the hands of careless or unfaithful agents. It would seem that Jones recovered about ten thousand dollars from the estate of his brother, though the commonwealth had already administered to it—a circumstance that probably did not at all contribute to increase the succession. All, or a portion of the money left in Tobago, was also recovered, so that our hero might now be said to be at ease in his circumstances.

At a later period of his life, Jones became a little remarkable for a display of poetic taste. This tendency, which can scarcely be said to have ever approached the “sacred fire,” was seen even at this early day, for he subsequently spoke of his intention to devote the remainder of his days to calm contemplation and poetic ease, when he revisited Virginia. This feeling, quite probably, received some incentive from the discontent of a man who had not long before escaped from an inquiry that he deemed a persecution. It is certain that, while resident in Virginia, he assumed the name of Jones; calling himself John Paul Jones, instead of John Paul, which was his legal and proper appellation. The motive of this change of name, as well as the reason of the selection he made, are left to conjecture. It is probable the latter was purely arbitrary, as he does not appear to have had any near relatives or connections of the name of Jones. For the change itself, the most rational supposition is, that it was induced by his difficulties in connection with the affair of Mungo Maxwell. Sands thinks it may have come from a determination of founding a new race, when Jones transferred himself to a new

country. Mackenzie fancies it may have proceeded from a wish to conceal his intended service against England, from the friends he had left in Scotland, or a desire to prevent his enemies from recognising him as a native of Great Britain, in the event of capture. Neither of these reasons is satisfactory. That of Sands is purely imaginary, and unlikely to occur to a man who does not seem to think of marrying at all. Those of Mackenzie are equally untenable, since the friends Jones left in Scotland were too humble in station to render it necessary, or useful, or probable. How could one born in the colonies be thought any safer in the event of capture, in 1775, than one born in Great Britain, allegiance being claimed from all its subjects alike, by the British crown? In a letter to Robert Morris, Jones says, "I conclude that Mr. Hewes has acquainted you with a very great misfortune which befell me some years ago, and which brought me to North America. I am under no concern, whatever, that this, or any other past circumstance of my life, will sink me in your opinion. Since human wisdom cannot secure us from accidents, it is the greatest effort of human wisdom to bear them well." This passage has induced Mr. Sands to think the "great misfortune" was some heavy mercantile loss. There is no evidence to show, nor is it at all probable, that Jones had then been in circumstances to justify his using such an expression as addressed to a man of Robert Morris' rank and extensive dealings; and it is far more rational to suppose that the word "accidents" has been loosely applied to the circumstances connected with Maxwell's death, than to any other event of Jones' life. If a

“great misfortune” had any agency in bringing him to America, it was probably this event; and it may have induced him to change his name, in a moment of disgust, or of morbid resentment.

It is remarkable that there should still be a mystery connected with this change of name, in a man of Jones’ celebrity. One of his near connections thinks that the new appellation was not assumed until he entered the American navy, and that it might have been taken in compliment to Gen. Wm. Jones, of North Carolina, who had been much his friend. This circumstance may have induced the selection of the name, though it scarcely seems sufficient to account for the change itself. It is probably now too late to hope to explain the mystery.

The year 1775, therefore, found Jones in every respect in a proper mood to seek service in the young marine that sprung up out of the events of the day. He offered his services, accordingly, and they were accepted. There is reason to think Jones had a real attachment to the colonies, as well as to the principles for which they contended; and it is certain that, having fairly cast his fortunes in them, he had just as good a moral right to maintain both as any native of the country. The obligations created by the mere accidents of birth, can never, in a moral sense, justly be put in competition with the social ties that are deliberately formed in later life, and he is a traitor only who betrays by deceiving. The argument, that a native of England, established in America in 1775, had not the same moral right to resist parliamentary aggression as the subject born in the colonies, is like advancing a

distinction between the social claims and duties of the man born in Yorkshire and those of the man born in London. By the English constitution, itself, the resident of the British capital had a right to oppose the aggressions which led to the American Revolution; and it was a right that did not extend to open revolt, merely, because the aggressions did not affect him in that direct and positive manner that alone justifies resistance to existing law under the plea of necessity. All attempts, then, to brand Jones as a pirate, and as having been peculiarly a traitor to his country, must rest on fallacies for their support; his case being substantially the same as those of Charles Lee, Gates, Montgomery, and a hundred others of merit and reputation; the difference of serving on the ocean, instead of serving on the land, and of being the means of carrying the war into the island of Great Britain itself, being the only reason why so much odium has been heaped on the one, while the others have virtually escaped.

Jones does not appear to have had any connection with the American Navy, until a short time before the passage of the law of December 22, 1775, which, in fact, gave it legal and efficient existence. By this law, a commander-in-chief, four captains, and thirteen lieutenants were appointed. The latter were classed as first, second, and third lieutenants, and of these the name of John Paul Jones takes rank of all others of the highest grade. His commission is said to have been dated the 7th of December, fifteen days before the passage of the law. This, in fact, made him the sixth in rank in the service; though other appointments were

shortly after made, and the question of permanent rank was reserved for future consideration. Thus, in the following year, when independence had been declared, and the rank was regulated, we find Dudley Saltonstall, the oldest captain by the law of December, 1775, placed as the fourth on the list, and Abraham Whipple, the second, reduced as low as to be the twelfth. As respected himself, Jones subsequently complained of a similar mortification, though it would seem unjustly, as the whole matter was understood when the appointments were made. There was some hardship in his case, however, as two of those who were his junior lieutenants in 1775, were made captains above him in 1776. Still, it was in a revolution, related to original appointments, and every thing depended on the original understanding.

Jones was ordered to the *Alfred* 24, Commodore Hopkins' own vessel, as her first lieutenant. A sloop called the *Providence* was purchased, and he was offered the command of her, but declined it, in consequence of his ignorance of the mode of sailing such a craft. Jones always affirmed that he first hoisted the flag of the United Colonies, with his own hands, when Commodore Hopkins first visited the *Alfred*. This occurred on the Delaware, off Philadelphia; and the flag was the pine-tree and rattle-snake, the symbols then used by the colonies.

As a matter of course, Jones was in the expedition against New Providence. The squadron did not get out of the Delaware until the 17th February, 1776, lying frozen in, at Reedy Island, for six weeks. It is supposed that this circumstance enabled Capt. Barry

to get to sea in the Lexington before it, though that brig was purchased and commissioned subsequently to the equipment of the vessels of Commodore Hopkins' squadron.

Jones was useful in piloting the vessels through some difficulties on the Bahama Banks, and seems to have enjoyed a consideration every way equal to his rank. In the action which occurred with the Glasgow 24, on the return of the squadron to America, he was stationed on the gun-deck of the Alfred, and had no other responsibility than was attached to the management of his battery. He states, himself, that the main-deck guns of the Alfred were so near the water as to have been useless in a good breeze. On this occasion, however, the wind was light, and nothing occurred to disturb the fire, but the position of the vessel. Her wheel-rope was shot away, and, broaching to, the Alfred was sharply raked by the Glasgow, for some time, and must have been beaten but for the presence of the other vessels. As it was, the English ship got into Newport; a sufficient triumph of itself, when it is remembered that she had four or five enemies on her, two of which were but little her inferiors in force. On the 11th of April, Com. Hopkins carried his vessels into New London.

This was unquestionably Jones' first cruise, and the affair with the Glasgow was his first engagement. In that day slavers were not obliged to fight their way, or to run, as at present; and there is no evidence that our hero had ever before met an enemy. He must have been at sea two or three years, during the continuation of the war of 1756, but he nowhere speaks

of any adventures with the French cruisers. As the squadron sailed on the 17th February, and got into New London on the 11th April, the cruise lasted only fifty-three days; though it may be deemed an adventurous one, when we recollect the power of England and the indifferent qualities of the vessels.

From New London, Commodore Hopkins carried all his vessels round to Providence, when the affair with the Glasgow resulted, as unfortunate military operations are very apt to do, in courts martial. Captain Hazard, of the Providence 12, the sloop Jones had once declined accepting, was cashiered, and Jones was appointed to succeed him. His orders were dated May 10th, 1776. There being no blanks, the order to take the Providence as her captain was written by Commodore Hopkins on the back of the commission Jones held from Congress, as a lieutenant. Being, at that time, certainly the oldest lieutenant in the navy, his right to the command could not well be questioned.

The first service on which Jones was employed, after getting his vessel, was to transport certain troops to New York. Having done this with success, he returned to Rhode Island, hove out his sloop, and prepared her for more critical exploits. In June he was ready again for sea. He was now employed a few days in convoying military stores through the narrow waters about the eastern entrance of Long Island Sound; and, as this was done in the presence of an enemy of greatly superior force, it was an extremely delicate and arduous duty. He was frequently chased, and several times under fire, but always escaped by address and precaution. On one occasion he covered

the retreat of a brig that was coming in from the West Indies, laden with military supplies for Washington, and which was hard pressed by the Cerberus frigate. By drawing the attention of the latter to himself, the brig escaped, and, proving a fast vessel, she was subsequently bought into the service, and called the Hampden.

It would seem that the spirit, enterprise and seamanship Jones displayed, during the fortnight he was thus employed, at once gave him a character in the navy; his boldness and success having passed into history, although no event of a brilliancy likely to attract the common attention occurred. This is a proof that seamen appreciated what he had done.

In July, Jones sailed for Boston, always with convoy; thence he proceeded to the Delaware. As this was the moment when Lord Howe's fleet was crowding the American waters, the service was particularly critical, but it was successfully performed. While at Philadelphia, Jones received his commission as captain, signed by John Hancock; it was dated August the 8th. This fact rests on his own assertion,\* though Mr. Sherburne has given a copy of a commission dated October 10th, which he appears to think was the true commission of Jones. In this he is probably right; new commissions, arranged according to the regulated rank,

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\* It is proper to say, that the late Miss Jeanette Taylor, Jones' niece, a woman of intelligence and character, assured the writer that she once possessed the commission of her uncle, that was dated August 8th, but had given it away as containing an autograph signature of Hancock. The fact is of no material moment, the rank having been regulated only in October.



having doubtless been issued accordingly. It will be seen that Independence was declared a little before the arrival of the Providence at Philadelphia.

Hitherto, Jones had sailed under the orders of Com. Hopkins. He was now brought in immediate contact with the Marine Committee of Congress; and it is a proof of the estimation in which he was held, that the latter offered him the command of the Hampden, the vessel he had rescued from the Cerberus, by his own address. Jones, by this time, had got to understand the Providence, and he preferred remaining in her, now that he had her ready for immediate action, to accepting a vessel that had still to be equipped, though the latter was much the most considerable craft. The Providence mounted only twelve four-pounders, and she had a crew of seventy men.

The Marine Committee next ordered the Providence out on a cruise that was not to exceed three months, giving her commander roving orders. Jones sailed on the 12th of August, and went off Bermuda. Here he fell in with the Solebay, frigate, which vessel outsailed him on a wind, with a heavy sea going, and actually got within pistol shot of him, in spite of all his efforts. While closing, the frigate kept up a steady fire from her chase-guns. Jones saw that he must change his course, if he would escape; and, getting ready, he bore up, set his square-sail, studding-sails, &c., and went off before the wind, directly under the broadside of his enemy. The manœuvre was a bold one, but its success must have been, in some measure, owing to a concurrence of favorable circumstances. There was a cross sea on, and the Solebay not anticipating any se-

rious conflict with so inconsiderable an enemy, doubtless had her broadside guns secured ; or, if either battery had been manned at all, it was probably on the weather side, the Providence having been a little to windward during most of the chase. Previously to putting his helm up, Jones edged gradually away, thus effecting his intention completely by surprise ; the officers of the Solebay having reason to suppose they were gradually weathering on the chase, until they saw her going off dead before the wind. By the time the frigate could get her light sails set, the sloop was beyond the reach of grape, and her safety was insured, the Providence being unusually fast under her square canvas.

After this critical chase, which had some such reputation, though in a less degree, at the commencement of the war of the Revolution, as that of the Constitution possessed at the commencement of the war of 1812, the Providence went to the eastward. Off the Isle of Sable, she fell in with the Milford 32, which chased her, under fire, for nearly eight hours. Jones does not appear to have run the same risk on this occasion, as in the affair of the Solebay, though he evidently considered the adventure creditable to himself. In point of fact, he kept, most of the time, just without the drop of the enemy's shot, though there were moments when both vessels kept up a distant cannonade. If there was any particular merit on the part of the Americans, it was in the steadiness and judgment with which Jones estimated his own advantages, and the audacity with which he used them. Such experiments certainly give confidence to a marine, and increase its means of usefulness, by bringing the hazards a vessel is compelled to run, down

to a just and accurate standard. Manœuvring boldly, in face of a superior force, either on shore or afloat, is an evidence of high military confidence, and insomuch a pledge of both spirit and skill. The influence of both these little affairs must have been highly beneficial on the temper of the American navy.

The day succeeding the last chase, Jones went into Canseau, where he destroyed the English fishing establishment, burned several vessels, and shipped some men. He next went to Isle Madame, and made several descents of a similar character, displaying great activity and zeal. In the course of the cruise the Providence made sixteen prizes, besides destroying a great number of fishermen. She was out more than six weeks, reaching Providence, on her return, October 7th, 1776.

The representations of Capt. Jones induced Com. Hopkins to send an expedition against the colliers of Cape Breton, including the adjacent fisheries. The Alfred had not been out since her first cruise, and was then lying in the river without a crew. That ship, the Hampden, and Providence were selected for the purpose, and the command of the whole was assigned to Jones. No better proof of the estimation in which he was held, or of the influence he had obtained by means of his character, is needed than this fact. The orders were dated October 22d, 1776, and were perfectly legal; for, though Congress regulated the rank on the 10th, Com. Hopkins continued at the head of the navy until the succeeding January, when his office was abolished.

Jones soon found he could not collect a sufficient number of men for the three vessels, and he came to a determination to sail with only the Alfred and Hamp-

den. This arrangement was changed, however, in consequence of the Hampden's getting ashore, and her officers and people were transferred to the Providence. This occurred on the 27th October, and the two vessels were unable to get out until the 2d of November. As it was, Jones conceived he put to sea very short-handed; the Alfred mustering only 140 souls, whereas she had sailed from Philadelphia, the previous February, with 235.\*

As this is the time at which the rank was regulated, though the circumstances do not seem to have yet been known in Rhode Island, it is proper to explain the influence the new arrangement had on the position of our subject. In the first appointments, Jones ranked as the senior first lieutenant of the navy. The fourth officer of the same grade was Mr. Hoysted Hacker, who was promoted to a command soon after Jones himself received his own advancement. Still, Capt. Jones ranked Capt. Hacker, and the latter had actually been appointed to command the Hampden, in the expedition to the eastward. This same officer was transferred to the Providence, and actually sailed as a subordinate to Jones on the 2d November, when, by the regulated rank established by a vote of Congress twenty-two days before, he was placed above him on the new list of captains. On that list appear the names of twenty-four captains. Of these, Jones ranks as the eighteenth, and Capt. Hacker as the sixteenth. It is not surprising that the former complained of such a change; though his argu-

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\* Clarke, Mackenzie, and various other writers give the Alfred and Columbus, each, 300 men, on the expedition against New Providence; crews altogether disproportioned to the sizes of the ships. Jones' own authority is used for what we say.

ments against the elevation of many respectable gentlemen who were placed over him, under original appointments, at the regular formation of the marine and after the declaration of independence, are by no means as strong.

The Alfred and Providence went to the eastward, as had been arranged, crossing the shoals. They passed many of the enemy's ships that were lying off Block Island, in the night, anchoring in Tarpaulin Cove, for light to go over the shallow water. While lying in the Cove, a privateer was examined for deserters, four of which were found, and a few men were pressed, as Jones always maintained, in obedience to orders from Com. Hopkins. This affair, subsequently, gave Jones a good deal of trouble. He was sued by the owner of the privateer, the damages being laid at £10,000; Com. Hopkins declining to justify the act. This, for some time, was one of the many grievances of which Jones was in the habit of complaining, and quite probably with justice.

Off Louisburg, three prizes were made, one of which proved to be very valuable. It was a large store-ship, called the Mellish, conveying clothing to the British troops. The following night, the Providence parted company in a snow-storm. The two smaller prizes were now ordered in, but Jones continued his cruise, keeping the Mellish in company on account of her great importance to the American cause. A landing was made at Canseau, a good deal of injury done to the enemy, and the ships again put to sea. Off Louisburg, Jones took three colliers, out of a convoy, in a fog. Two days later, he captured a fine Letter of Marque, out of Liverpool. The Alfred was now full of prisoners,

and, it being of great importance to secure the Mellish, Jones shaped his course for Boston. On the 7th December, he fell in with his old acquaintance, the *Milford*, and had another critical chase, in which he succeeded in covering the Mellish, though the *Letter of Marque* was recaptured, owing to a false manœuvre of the prize-master. On the 15th, the *Alfred* went into Boston, the Mellish, for the sake of certainty, going to Dartmouth.

At Boston, Jones received an order from Com. Hopkins to transfer the *Alfred* to Capt. Hinman, who was his junior, on the regulated list, even, by two numbers. This was certainly a hard case, and cannot well be accounted for, except through the existence of prejudices against our hero. That Jones was the subject of many prejudices, throughout his life, is beyond a question; and it can scarcely be doubted that some of these feelings had their origin in faults of character. It is highly probable that he had some of the notions that the Englishman, or European, is known still to entertain toward the Americans, and which were much more general half-a-century since than they are to-day, the betrayal of which would not be very likely to make friends. It is undeniable that the Americans were an exceedingly provincial people in 1777; nor is the reproach entirely removed at the present time; and nothing is more natural than to hear men educated in a more advanced state of society, declaiming about defects that strike them unpleasantly; or nothing more natural than to find those strictures producing an active and blind resentment. Jones was unaided, too, by connections; even the delegates of Virginia appearing not to take the

usual interest of the representative, in an unknown and unsupported stranger. His chief reliance seems to have been on Mr. Hewes, of the Marine Committee, and on Robert Morris; the latter of whom became his firm friend in the end.

Jones remonstrated against this appointment of Capt. Hinman, and succeeded in getting an order to place the *Alfred*, *Columbus*, *Cabot*, *Hampden* and *Providence* under his own command, with directions to sail to the southward, with great discretionary powers. These orders produced no results; Com. Hopkins, according to Jones' account of the matter, throwing impediments in the way. It is probable, too, that in February, 1777, the country was not in a condition to fit out a military enterprise of so much importance; want of means being quite as instrumental in defeating Jones' hopes as want of will. There is, also, reason for thinking that Hopkins distrusted Jones' feelings as regards the country; the result most likely of some of his loose and indiscreet remarks.

Many of Jones' official letters, written during the cruises he had made, have been preserved, and aid in throwing light on his character. In general, they are plainly and respectably written, though they are not entirely free from the vaunting which was more in fashion formerly than it is to-day; and occasionally they betray an exaggerated and false taste. On the whole, however, they may be received as superior to the reports of most of the commanders of the age; many captains in even the regular marine of the mother country making reports essentially below those of Jones in sentiment, distinctness, and diction.

Hopkins having some of Jones' new squadron with himself, at Providence, and refusing to give them up, the latter made a journey to Philadelphia, in order to demand redress of Congress. He does not appear to have been regularly apprized of the regulated rank, until this occasion. A memorial, addressed to Congress, at a later day, and on the subject of rank, and his other grievances, was intemperate in language, and probably did his cause, which was tolerably strong in facts, no good. Speaking of the officers who were put above him on the regulated list, he says—"Among those thirteen, there are individuals who can neither pretend to parts nor education, and with whom, as a private gentleman, *I would disdain to associate.*" This is sufficiently vain-glorious, and downright rude. If he betrayed similar feelings while at Philadelphia, it is not surprising that his claims were slighted.

Jones had an explanation with Hancock on the subject of his rank, and left Philadelphia, soothed with assurances that his services were appreciated. He had the indiscretion, however, to let the commission, dated August 5th, 1776, pass out of his hands, and was never able to recover it. This commission, he afterward affirmed, was the first granted after the declaration of independence, and entitled him to be put at the head of the list of captains.\*

By the journal of Congress, it would seem that a resolution was passed on the 15th March, 1777, directing that one of those ships that had been previously

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\* It will be remembered that Miss Taylor told the writer she once owned this commission, and had given it away.



ordered to be purchased, should be given to "Capt. John Paul Jones, until better provision can be made for him." Referring to the dates of these different transactions, we are left to believe that this resolution was passed as some atonement for depriving our hero of his former command: that the project of sending him out with the vessels which Com. Hopkins detained, was subsequently formed, and a third means of employing this active officer was suggested after his visit to Philadelphia. It must be confessed, however, that much confusion exists in the dates of many of the events connected with the life of Jones, those connected with the resolutions of Congress, in particular, often appearing irreconcilable with known occurrences, unless we suppose that the passage of a resolution and its promulgation were by no means simultaneous. Thus it is that we find Jones expressing his surprise at the regulated rank, in April, 1777, though it was enacted in October, 1776.

The ship which was assigned to Jones, under the resolution just mentioned, was a vessel called the *Ranger*. She lay at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and wanted a great deal of work to fit her for sea. Her new captain immediately set about the necessary arrangements, when the third project alluded to was brought up, and he received fresh orders. The commissioners in Paris had ordered a very heavy frigate to be built in Holland, on account of government. This ship was, at first, called the *Indien*, and subsequently the *South Carolina*. She was one of the heaviest single-decked ships that had then ever been constructed, mounting Swedish thirty-sixes on her main deck. The

idea was now to give this ship to Jones, and to send him out to join her, with a party of officers and men, in a French Letter of Marque, called the *Amphitrite*, that had recently arrived with stores from Europe. The arrangement contemplated that Jones should cruise in the *Amphitrite*, on his way out, and, as France was then at peace with England, this could only be effected by a transfer of property. Owing to some difficulty of this nature, the scheme fell through; and, in June, by another resolution, Jones was ordered to the *Ranger* again. This ship he commenced fitting for sea, though it required months to effect the object. While engaged in the negotiation about the *Amphitrite*, Jones received a third commission as a captain, from the Marine Committee, direct. The two preceding it had been commissions to command particular vessels, while the present made him, in general terms, a captain in the navy, by virtue of which he might command any vessel of the government. This was done because the committee did not know precisely what the commissioners in France had effected in the way of ships in Europe. The date of this last commission corresponded with that given under the regulated rank.

It is worthy of remark, that the very day Congress ordered Jones to the *Ranger*, it adopted the stars and stripes as the flag of the republic. This was June 14th, 1777. One of the first things Jones did, on reaching his ship, was to hoist this new ensign. He always claimed to have been the first man to hoist the flag of 1775, in a national ship, and the first man to show the present ensign on board a man-of-war. This may be

true or not. There was a weakness about the character of the man that rendered him a little liable to self-delusions of this nature, and, while it is probable he was right as to the flag which was shown before Philadelphia, the town where Congress was sitting, it is by no means as reasonable to suppose that the first of the permanent flags was shown at a place as distant as Portsmouth. The circumstances are of no moment, except as they serve to betray a want of simplicity of character, that was rather a failing with the man, and his avidity for personal distinction of every sort.

The *Ranger* was not ready for sea before the 15th October. Even then her equipment was very imperfect, the vessel having but one suit of sails, and some of these were made of insufficient cloth. The ship was frigate built, like most of the sloops of that day, and was pierced for twenty-six guns; viz., eighteen below, and eight above. This number was furnished, but he rejected all but those for the main deck, mounting eighteen sixes. Even these guns he considered as three diameters of the bore too short. Of men he had enough, but his stores were very short, and it is a singular fact, that he could obtain but a barrel of rum for his whole crew. Under such difficulties, however, was the independence of this country obtained.

The *Ranger* sailed from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for France, Nov. 1st, 1777. This was the first time Jones had left America, or the American waters, since his arrival in Virginia, after the death of his brother. He still went to Europe in expectation of obtaining the Dutch-built frigate, intending to cruise in her, with the *Ranger* in company. On the 2d Dec. the

Ranger arrived at Nantes, having made two captures on the passage. She saw a convoy, but got nothing from it, and had a short chase with a two-decked ship. On all occasions, Jones represents his people, who were principally eastern men, as behaving well.

A severe disappointment awaited Jones on reaching France. Owing to the jealousy of England, the commissioners had found themselves under the necessity of transferring the ship building in Holland to the King of France; an arrangement which deprived them of all authority over her.\* Jones submitted to this defeat of his hopes with a moderation and good sense that are in his favor; thus proving, we think, that his many previous complaints were founded on just principles, in his own opinion at least, and not in querulousness of character, as has been sometimes alleged; for, in this case, the evil being unavoidable, he saw no good motive for quarrelling with fortune. He consoled himself with the

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\* The *Indien* was subsequently hired to the State of South Carolina, and had her name changed to that of the state. The negotiation was carried on through the agency of the Chevalier de Luxembourg. In his History of the Navy, the writer mentions his belief that this Chevalier de Luxembourg was not a sovereign prince, as has been supposed, but a member of the House of Montmorency. In an *Acte de famille* of this illustrious house, which was made in this century, we find these words—viz.:

“1731. The Duke of Chatillon had but one son, Charles Paul Sigismund, known by the name of Duke of Bouteville; who had an only son, Charles Anne de Montmorency-Luxembourg, Duke of Olonne. The Duke of Olonne had two sons, of which one, known as the *Chevalier de Luxembourg*, is dead without issue.”

There is no question that this Chevalier de Luxembourg is the person who hired the *Indien* to the State of South Carolina, *on shares*. As the ship had been given to the king, may not this have been a secret experiment in royal privateering?

knowledge that Congress thought him worthy of so important a trust, and says, "I can bear the disappointment with philosophy."

As soon as all hopes of getting another and better ship were abandoned, Jones took the *Ranger* round to Quiberon Bay, convoying some American vessels. Here he met the fleet of M. Le Motte Picquet, and opened a negotiation for a salute. His request was acceded to, and salutes were exchanged, not only with this distinguished officer, but, a few days later, with the Comte d'Orvillers, the commander-in-chief of the Brest fleet. In consequence of these proceedings, Jones claimed the honor of having received the first salute to the American flag, as he did that of having first hoisted the flag itself. It is certain he is mistaken as to the former of these claims, unless he means the particular flag adopted by Congress, June, 1777; for a serious difficulty occurred in consequence of a Dutch governor's having saluted an American vessel of war in the West Indies, the year previously. Still, the motive and the feeling were the same, and it was certainly a point gained to obtain a salute from a French commander-in-chief at the time mentioned.

While lying among the French ships, Jones seems to have had a good deal of communication with its flag officers. He even went so far as to submit certain plans to them for expeditions to America, a general war being now certain, and his projects show an active and fertile mind. These qualities, indeed, form the great and distinctive features of his character, one military scheme being no sooner disposed of than he turned his thoughts to another with untiring ingenuity.

April 10th, 1778, the *Ranger* again went to sea alone, Jones having relinquished all hope of doing any thing, for the present at least, without achieving it with his own limited means. It is usual to ascribe more credit to the great cruise that succeeded than to this of the *Ranger*, and yet Jones probably never showed more of his real character than in the enterprise which he now undertook. We shall first relate the events as they occurred, and then give a summary of their character and importance.

On the 14th, the *Ranger* took a vessel, loaded with flaxseed, and bound to Ireland. This prize secured, she shaped her course for St. George's Channel. Off Dublin she captured a London ship. The weather being favorable, Jones now determined to make a descent at Whitehaven, the place out of which he had first sailed, in order to destroy the shipping by fire. With this view, on the evening of the 18th, he was off the port, and, about ten at night, he was on the point of landing himself at the head of a party of volunteers, when the wind shifted, and began to blow so fresh, directly on shore, as to render the descent impracticable. The ship made sail to claw off the land.

The next day the *Ranger* chased a revenue wherry unsuccessfully, and, though the ship was disguised as a merchantman, it is thought the crew of the boat suspected her of being an enemy. It could not well be otherwise, indeed, since Jones, in his desire to get the boat, kept up a smart fire on her for some time. The next morning he found himself so near a coaster as to be compelled to sink her, in order to prevent the discovery of his presence. Another attempt inshore was

abandoned, the same day, on account of the state of the wind.

All this time Jones was close in with the land, visible from the shore, and looking into the different bays and roadsteads as he passed along the coast. One cutter he chased into the Clyde, going as high as the Rock of Ailsa, and he sunk a Dublin sloop, to prevent intelligence.

On the 20th, the *Ranger* was off Carrickfergus, and detained a fishing-boat that came alongside. A ship was at anchor in the road, which the prisoners said was the *Drake*, Capt. Burden, a vessel of about the size, armament and metal of the *Ranger*; though she is said to have carried two more guns. This was just such an opportunity as Jones wanted, and though he was alone on an enemy's coast, and might be said to be fighting with a halter round his neck, he at once resolved to attack his enemy at anchor, as soon as it was dark. That night, therefore, the *Ranger* stood in, with a strong breeze, with the intention of laying the *Drake* athwart hawse, grappling, and fighting it out. Owing to the darkness, however, and the anchor's hanging, the *Ranger* brought up about half a cable's length on the *Drake's* quarter, instead of the position desired, and Jones at once saw the expediency of abandoning the design. He ordered the cable cut, on the instant, so as to give the appearance of its having parted in snubbing, made sail, and began to beat out of the loch. As no warlike demonstration had yet been made, singular as it may seem, this was done without molestation from the *Drake*. It was Jones' intention to work to windward, and to renew the attempt the same night, but it blew so fresh that he was glad to get an offing on any

terms. The wind increased to a gale, and he stood over toward the coast of Scotland to find a lee.

As soon as the weather moderated, Jones determined to renew the attempt on Whitehaven. On the night of the 22d he got off that port again, though not as close in as he wished, in consequence of the lightness of the wind. At midnight he left the ship, having with him, in two boats, thirty-one volunteers. Day began to dawn just as the party reached the outer pier. Jones now divided his men. One party was sent, under Lieut. Wallingford, to set fire to the shipping on the north side of the harbor, while he went himself with the other to do the same on the south. There was a small fort on Jones' side, with a few men in it as a guard. He scaled the walls, found the men in the guard-house, where he secured them, and spiked the guns. Jones now took a single officer and went a distance of a quarter of a mile to another battery, the guns of which he also spiked.

On his return from the distant battery, Jones expected to find the ships on fire. So far from this, however, nothing material had been done. Mr. Wallingford had altogether abandoned his portion of the enterprise, the candle on which he relied having burnt out just as it was time to use it. The same accident had occurred on his own side of the harbor also. It was now broad daylight, and the alarm had been given, but Jones would not abandon his design. A candle was procured from a house, and a fire was kindled in the steerage of a large ship. As this vessel lay surrounded by a hundred and fifty or two hundred other craft, all high and dry, the tide being out, there is no question that



a good fire, fairly kindled, would have destroyed the whole.

The great object of Jones was now to repair the loss of time. The sun had risen, and the people of the place were already in motion, though confused and in alarm. The fire burnt but slowly, and search was made for combustibles to aid it. At length a barrel of tar was found and poured upon the flames. Jones then collected his men, and ordered them to embark from the end of the pier. By this time the inhabitants of the place were out in thousands, and some of the men ran towards the pier. Jones met the last with a presented pistol, ordering them off, at the risk of their lives. Such was the influence of courage and steadiness, that these men retreated, leaving the pier in possession of this handful of enemies. As the flames now burst out of the steerage and began to ascend the rigging, and the sun had been up an hour, Jones thought it prudent to retire. He had remained some time on the pier all alone, and embarked without molestation, though the eminences around were covered with spectators.

The boats retired without difficulty. Attempts were made to fire on them from the batteries, but the guns were all spiked. One or two pieces, however, had escaped, or, as Jones believed, ship's guns were dragged down upon the pier, and began to play upon the adventurers without effect. No person was injured in the affair, and only one man was missing. This person is supposed to have deserted, and to have given the alarm; such a man coming to several houses with the news that a ship had been set on fire. Nor was any material damage done to the shipping, the people of the place

succeeding in extinguishing the flames, before they reached the other vessels. Jones took three prisoners, whom he brought off as a sort of trophy.

The same day the *Ranger* crossed the Solway, and made a landing at St. Mary's Isle, where is the seat of the Earls of Selkirk. Jones had but a single boat on this occasion, and he landed again in person. His object was to seize Lord Selkirk, fancying that a prisoner of his rank might be useful in affecting the treatment of the Americans, who were then in the English prisons. Ascertaining, soon after he had landed, that Lord Selkirk was not at home, Jones returned to his boat. But the men complained of being again disappointed, and, after some discussion, their captain assented that they might go to the house and ask for plate. They were limited to accepting such as was offered. The truth is not to be concealed, that an officer was at the head of this party, but many of the officers of that period were men taken from trading vessels, and were actuated by motives that were little honorable to them. Lady Selkirk received the officers of this party herself, none of the men being suffered to enter the house. Some plate, valued at about £100,\* was delivered, and the party retired, doing no other harm.

In the present day, such an act would be entirely unjustifiable. No American officer would dare to be

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\* The connection of Jones, already mentioned, affirms that the value of the plate taken was more than \$5000. Our information was obtained from the present head of the house of Selkirk. Which is right, it is impossible to say, though it strikes us that the smaller sum is most likely to be the true one. If Jones actually paid £1000 sterling out of his own pocket, to redeem this plate, as Miss Taylor seems to think, it greatly enhances the merit of his sacrifices.

guilty of it openly; and it is to be hoped no one would wish to do it at all. Acts very similar to it, however, have been committed on our own coasts within the last thirty years, if not with the connivance of officers, at least in their presence. If we go back a century earlier, it was the common mode of warfare of the Drakes and other commanders of the English service. As it was, Jones was sensible of its unworthiness, and he subsequently purchased the plate and restored it to its owner. Owing to the difficulties of communication, nearly or quite ten years elapsed before Lord Selkirk actually recovered his property, but he acknowledges that he got it at last, and expressed his satisfaction with the course pursued by Jones.

A letter written by Jones to Lady Selkirk, on this occasion, has been often published, and has been greatly praised. It has much of the exaggerated and false taste of the writer, while it shows creditable sentiments. Its great fault is a want of simplicity, a defect that seems to have pervaded Jones' character. That Jones committed a fault in allowing the plunder at all is undeniable, though he seems to have yielded solely to a temporary expedient, reserving to himself the intention to repair the wrong at the earliest occasion. Sordid he was not; and admitting the redemption to have been an after-thought even, there is no reason for believing that he was any way influenced by a wish to make money. With such an end in view, a man of his enterprise would scarcely have limited his efforts to accepting the little plate that was offered. He would have stripped the house.

The landing at St. Mary's Isle occurred on the 23d

April, and the following morning the *Ranger* once more appeared off Carrickfergus, where Jones saw symptoms that the *Drake* was preparing to come out. That the character of the American ship was not known, however, is clear from the fact that the *Drake* sent a boat out to reconnoitre. This boat was decoyed alongside, and her officer and crew captured. From his prisoners Jones ascertained that intelligence of what had occurred at Whitehaven reached Carrickfergus the previous night, and no doubt was entertained that the ship which had appeared off the one place was the vessel that had made the attempt on the *Drake* in the other. The latter vessel had weighed the lost anchor of the *Ranger*; and it was now ascertained that she had received many volunteers on board, and was coming out in quest of her enemy. The only doubt, therefore, which could exist among the English was whether the vessel now in the offing was the same as that which had made the two previous attempts.

When the *Drake* got under way, she was accompanied by several boats filled with persons who were disposed to be witnesses of the action. Jones hove-to and waited for his enemy, amid a scene that might well have disturbed the self-confidence of a man of less fortitude. He was in the narrow waters of the most powerful naval power on earth, with the three kingdoms in plain view. Alarm smokes were raised on each side of the channel, in great numbers, showing that his foes were up and doing. He had already given occasion for extraordinary activity, and an enemy that had enjoyed time to get perfectly ready, and which, to say the least, was always his equal in force, was coming out from her

moorings purposely to engage him. This, according to a favorite expression of Jones himself, was literally going into "harm's way."

The tide was not favorable, and the English ship came out very slowly. The Ranger's drift was to windward, and her helm was put up several times, in order to run down toward her enemy, when she would throw her main-top-sail aback, and lie with her courses in the brails. As soon as the amateurs ascertained that the boat which was towing astern of the strange ship was that sent out by the Drake, they all bore up and ran back into the loch. At length, long after the turn of the day, the English ship succeeded in weathering the headland, and was enabled to lay a straight course into the offing. She now set her colors, and the Ranger showed what it was then the fashion of England to call the "rebel flag." Jones filled and stood off the land, under easy canvas, to lead his enemy out mid-channel. The Drake followed, gradually closing, until she got within hail.

Jones had at length gained his point, and was in momentary expectation of commencing an action with an enemy's ship of equal force. While he awaited her fire, he was hailed, with a demand to know who and what he was. The answer was given by the master, under Jones' direction—"This is the American continental ship Ranger," he said; "we wait for you, and beg you will come on. The sun is little more than an hour high, and it is time to begin." This cool invitation was scarcely given before the Ranger fell broad off and delivered her fire. The Drake answered this attack, the two ships closing and running off before a

light wind. It was soon apparent that the *Ranger* was getting the best of it; her adversary's spars and sails beginning to suffer. Still the action was animated and well maintained for just one hour and four minutes, when the *Drake* called out for quarter; her ensign having been previously shot away.

This battle was fairly fought, side by side, and the victory not only gallantly but neatly won. Jones states, in his account of the cruise, that no one on board the *Drake* placed her people, including the volunteers, at less than one hundred and sixty, while some admitted there must have been one hundred and ninety souls on board. He estimated the loss of the *Drake*, in killed and wounded, at forty-two, though this exceeds the English statement by nearly half. The volunteers must have rendered the official account of the English very problematical, and there was somewhat of conjecture in that of Jones. Captain Burden fell by a musket-shot in the head, though he was found alive on taking possession of the prize. The English first lieutenant, also, was mortally wounded. The *Drake's* fore and main-topsail-yards were both down on the cap—main-top-gallant yard and gaff were hanging up and down, the jib was in the water, and, otherwise, the ship had sustained much injury aloft.

The *Ranger* suffered far less. She had two men killed and six wounded. Mr. Wallingford, the lieutenant who landed at Whitehaven, was one of the former, and a seaman among the wounded subsequently died. The gunner was hurt, and Mr. Powers, a midshipman, lost an arm. Jones remarks, in one of his letters, that he gave the dead a "spacious grave."

The weather continued good, and the repairs proceeded actively. At first Jones intended to steer the direct course for France, but the wind coming foul, he changed his purpose, and passed up channel again. The evening of the 25th, or that of the day after the engagement, the two ships were off the bay of Belfast, once more, and here Jones dismissed the fishermen he had taken. He gave them a boat, money, and other necessities, and lent them a sail of the Drake's, as a hint to those ashore concerning the fate of that vessel.

On the 8th of May, the *Ranger*, with the *Drake* in company, arrived safely at Brest. Some bad weather had been encountered on the passage, but no event worthy of being mentioned occurred, unless it be that Jones felt himself bound to arrest his first lieutenant, Simpson, for disobedience of orders, in managing the prize. This affair gave him a good deal of trouble subsequently, though nothing of serious moment grew out of it. The *Ranger* appears to have been well manned but badly officered, as would be likely to happen with a vessel fitted in an eastern American port, at that early day.

A great sensation was produced by this cruise of the *Ranger*. It lasted but twenty-eight days; only one week passed between the arrival off the Isle of Man and the action with the *Drake*. Every hour of this time was passed in ceaseless activity. One enterprise was no sooner ended than another was begun. The reader has only to cast an eye at the map, to understand the boldness with which the ship moved. Her audacity probably caused her impunity, for there was scarcely a more critical position, as to mere localities, in

the narrow seas, than that into which Jones carried her. It is true, he knew every foot of the way, but he must have known the dangers of his path, as well as its disadvantages. The attempt on Whitehaven betokened a military mind, though it would scarcely be justified under any other principles of hostility than those so much in vogue with the English themselves. It was merited retaliation, and only failed through the incompetence of subordinates. Throughout the whole of this cruise, indeed, Jones displayed the highest species of courage; that of justly appreciating his own resources, and of not exaggerating dangers, a union of spirit and judgment that ever produces the best commanders.

Jones has been censured for having selected the region of his birth as the scene of his exploits. While it has been admitted that he had a perfect moral and political right to espouse the cause of his adopted country, it has been urged that he ought to have refrained from selecting, as the scene of his exploits, the very port out of which he had formerly sailed. We apprehend that this is the reasoning of a sickly and superficial sentimentality, rather than of healthful sentiment. Had he captured and destroyed fifty sail belonging to Whitehaven, at sea, nothing would have been thought of the occurrence; but to destroy the same, or any other number, in their port is ranked as an error, and by some it is classed with crimes! Others have even fancied that a desire to revenge himself for imaginary wrongs led him to the coast of Scotland, and to Whitehaven, and that, under the pretence of serving public interests, he was, in truth, avenging private griefs. A calm consideration of the facts will show the injustice of these charges.



Jones was ordered to France. He was ordered to cruise against England, on the English coast. In this latter particular, he followed the precedents of Wickes and Conyngham. In selecting the scene of his exploits, he went into a sea with which he was familiar, an immense advantage of itself, and one, in a military point of view, he would have been censurable for neglecting, under the circumstances. If it were justifiable to retaliate for the enemy's burnings, it was proper to do so under the greatest advantages, and at the least risk to those employed on the service, and this could be done but by the greatest intimacy with the localities. To say that an officer is not to turn his knowledge to account in this way, because it was acquired under the sanction of ordinary intercourse and a state of peace, is like saying that Jones should not use the knowledge of navigation acquired in an English school to the injury of an English vessel. If he had a right to bear arms at all, in such a contest, he had a perfect right to use all the means practiced in civilized warfare, in effecting his objects.

That private feelings were kept out of view, in this short but brilliant cruise, is seen from the fact that no injury was done, or attempted on shore, when the means offered. It would have been as easy to set fire to the house, on St. Mary's Isle, as to carry off the plate. The shipping alone was fired at Whitehaven, and generally the conduct of Jones showed a spirit of generous hostility, rather than one of vindictive resentment. In a civil war, men must thus use the local information acquired in youth, or neglect their duties. No class of warriors do this more than sailors, who con-

stantly avail themselves of knowledge obtained in the confidence of friendly intercourse to harass their enemies. It is proper to add that the letter of Jones to Lady Selkirk, apologizing for taking the plate, was dated the day the *Ranger* anchored at Brest.

The cruise of the *Ranger* brought Jones much reputation. Still he had many causes of complaint, being greatly in want of funds. His difficulties were, in truth, the difficulties of the country and the times, rather than of any intention to harass him. He was fortunate enough to make many important friends, and was much caressed in the naval circles of Brest. His recent success gave a species of authority to his bold opinions, and it was not long ere various schemes were entertained for employing him on other expeditions against the enemy. The Duc de Chartres, afterward the celebrated Egalité, interested himself to obtain the *Indien*, still, for Jones, the ship being then at the disposal of the King of France. All Jones' projects had a far-sighted reach, as was shown in his wish to burn the shipping at Whitehaven, which he says would have greatly distressed Ireland for coal. Some of his schemes were directed to convoys, others to the destruction of shipping, and some again to descents on the coast. Even Franklin entertained the hope of getting possession of the *Indien* for him, after all; a plan for which was actually arranged with the French Minister of Marine. An exchange of prisoners was agreed on, with a view to man the vessel, one of the important results which attended the late cruise. It is an evidence how much the public appreciated that cruise, that the Prince of Nassau, an

officer who subsequently caused Jones much trouble, had an idea of sailing under his orders.

The breaking out of the war between England and France defeated many of Jones' hopes, though it rendered the connection of the Americans with the latter country much more simple than it had been. Holland objected to giving up the Indien, and thus put an end to all his expectations from that quarter. To increase his vexations, the difficulty with his first lieutenant remained unsettled, notwithstanding his own efforts to obtain a court-martial, it being the opinion of the commissioners and others, that Jones had himself released his subordinate from arrest in a way that precluded a trial. This matter terminated by Simpson's sailing for America, in command of the *Ranger*, leaving Jones in France to push his projects of higher aim.

For some time, Jones expected to receive different frigates from the French Minister, which were to serve under the American flag. Many difficulties arose to disappoint him, until all the various plans were concluded by the scheme actually adopted. As this enterprise was connected with the great action of Jones' life, it is necessary to explain it a little in detail.

M. Le Ray, a banker of Paris much connected with America, and who, from owning the estate of Chaumont, was styled Le Ray de Chaumont, had taken an active part in Jones' plans. Under his direction, an arrangement, or *concordat*, to the following effect was made. The French officers employed were to receive American commissions for the cruise, and rank and command were to be according to seniority. This provision left Jones at the head of the squadron, he being

the oldest American captain connected with the expedition. Succession was provided for, with the exception of the command of the *Cerf*, a cutter, the first lieutenant of which craft was to succeed his own captain, in the event of his removal or loss. The distribution of prize money was to be in the proportions regulated by the laws of the two countries, respectively, and the prizes were to be sent in to the order of M. Le Ray.

In addition to the express provisions of this *concordat*, which was signed by all the commanders and M. Le Ray, it was understood that the latter, as apparent agent of the King of France, should furnish certain vessels, which were to revert to their former owners after the cruise, and that the American commissioners were to order the *Alliance*, a new frigate which had recently come to Europe, to join the squadron.

There is still something mysterious about the character of this celebrated expedition. There is no doubt that Jones believed that he was to be fairly employed as a naval captain of an allied power, in command against the common enemy, in conformity with the ordinary practice on such occasions; but it is by no means certain that this was his real position. It is true, that the commissioners gave legality to the enterprise, but there are certain reasons for thinking that private cupidity may have had more connection with it than is usual with public measures. Intrigue was so common and so elaborate in France, that one is hardly safe in forming any precise opinion under the circumstances, though nothing is more apparent than the fact that Jones' squadron was not composed of ships of war belonging to France, united with ships of war belonging

to America, in order to carry out the purposes of ordinary warfare. Still, most of the expense appears to have been borne by the French government, and joint orders were received from the public functionaries of the two countries. Jones had a strong distaste for the *concordat*, which probably gave the whole affair too much of the character of a privateering compact, and he subsequently declared that he would not have signed it, had it not been presented at the last moment, by M. Le Ray, himself, under circumstances that rendered a refusal difficult.

Under the arrangement made, a squadron was finally, though very imperfectly, equipped. It contained five vessels, or three frigates, a brig, and a cutter. The ships were the Duke of Duras, the Alliance, and the Pallas; the brig was called the Vengeance, and the cutter the Cerf, or Stag. Of all these crafts, but two were regularly constructed for war, the Alliance 32, and the Stag 12. The Alliance was an exceedingly fast American-built ship of the class of large thirty-twos. All the other vessels were French.

After all his delays and disappointments, Jones could get no better vessel for his own pennant than the Duc de Duras, an Indiaman, then fourteen years old. She proved in the end to be both dull and rotten, though she was purchased as fast and sound. She was a long, single-decked ship, and was pierced for twenty-eight guns on her main-deck. Her armament was intended for eighteens. This would have placed her about on a level, as to force, with the English thirty-eights of that day, supposing that she carried ten or twelve light guns on her quarter-deck and fore-castle. The eighteens

were yet to be cast, however, and failing to appear, Jones put twelves in their places. To supply this material deficiency, he caused twelve ports to be cut in the gun-room, or below, where he mounted six eighteens, intending to fight them all on one side in smooth water. Eight nines and sixes were placed above, making a total armament of forty-two guns; or of twenty-four in broad-side, supposing the six eighteens to be fought together. Three hundred and eighty souls composed her crew. The last was a motley set, including natives of nearly every known maritime Christian nation, and having no less than one hundred and thirty of them enlisted in the character of soldiers.

The Alliance had an ordinary American crew, while the other vessels appear to have been purely French. To render the whole more incongruous, however, the Alliance had a Frenchman for a captain; a person of the name of Landais, whom Congress had appointed in compliment to its new ally. M. Landais had been educated in the navy of his native country, but had left it in consequence of an irascible temper, that was constantly getting him into trouble, and which proved to be of great disservice to this expedition in the end. Some persons even called his sanity in question.

Jones found a few native Americans of whom to make sea officers and petty officers for the Duc de Duras, but he mentions in one of his statements that altogether they did not exceed thirty. He changed the name of his vessel, however, to the Goodman Richard, or le Bon Homme Richard, in compliment to Franklin, as near an approach to nationality as that circumstance would well allow.

This motley squadron sailed from Groix, June 19th, 1779, or more than a year after Jones' return from his cruise in the *Ranger*. All that precious time had been wasted in endeavoring to obtain a command. The first object was to convoy some vessels southward, which duty was successfully performed. An accident occurred, however, by means of which the *Alliance* ran into the *Richard*, injuring both vessels so much as to render it necessary to return to port. The vessels separated, by orders, to do this, leaving the *Richard* alone for a day or two. While thus situated, two English cruisers were made, and Jones offered battle, but it is supposed the enemy mistook him for a ship of the line, as they carried a press of canvas to escape. The occurrence is of no importance, except to show that the people of the *Richard* were ready to fight; Jones praising the alacrity they manifested.

The rottenness of the old Indiaman does not appear to have been discovered until after she got back to the roads of Groix, in order to be repaired. While the work was in progress, a court-martial sat, and broke the first lieutenant of the *Richard*. About this time, a cartel arrived at Nantes, bringing in more than a hundred exchanged American seamen, from Mill prison. A short time before this exchange was made, Mr. Richard Dale, late a master's mate of the U. S. brig *Lexington*, had made his escape from the same prison, and had joined Jones in his old capacity. This gentleman, a native of Virginia, and subsequently the well-known naval captain of his name, was now made first lieutenant of the *Richard* by Jones, who had blank commissions by him. The men of the cartel were ap-

plied to, and many of them entered, thus giving the Richard a respectable body of Americans to help to sustain the honor of the flag she wore. Among the exchanged prisoners were two gentlemen of the name of Lunt, both natives of New Hampshire, and distant relatives. Henry Lunt was made second lieutenant of the Richard, while Cutting Lunt, his kinsman, is sometimes called the third lieutenant, and sometimes the master. Both these officers were respectable men, and appear to have given Jones satisfaction, until adverse circumstances deprived him of their services. In consequence of this arrangement, it is believed that every quarter-deck sea-officer of the Richard was a native American, Jones himself and one midshipman excepted.

It is a proof of the native goodness of Jones' heart, that, while lying at l'Orient, surrounded by perplexities, he sent a bill for £30 to his relatives in Scotland. This was not his only remittance, by several; and, as money was far from being plenty with him in that day, they show the strength of his affections, and his desire to serve his sisters.

When all was ready to go out again, two privateers, the Monsieur and the Grandeville, put themselves under Jones' orders, raising his force to seven sail. As the Monsieur was frigate-built, and carried forty guns, her junction was thought a matter of no slight importance.

On the 10th August, Jones issued some general orders to his captains, laying great stress on the point of not parting company; the commonest of all embarrassments with an irregular force at sea. The Richard had not proved a fast ship; the Pallas, a light 20 gun



ship, was decidedly dull, having also been built for a merchantman; the Vengeance was barely respectable, while the Cerf was every way a noble cutter, though of trifling force. The Alliance, one of the fastest ships that ever floated, had been badly ballasted by Mons. Landais, on some philosophical principles of his own, and lost her qualities for that cruise. Such, then, was the character of the force, with which Jones once more ventured into the narrow seas, in quest of glory.

The orders under which Jones sailed on his next and most remarkable cruise, directed him to go to the westward of Scilly, and to pass the west coast of Ireland, doubling the extremity of Scotland, and remaining some time on the Dogger Bank. By returning to his port of departure, this would have been making the complete circuit of Great Britain and Ireland, most of the time keeping the land aboard. The instructions, however, ordered him to put into the Texel for further orders. It was understood that this last destination was pointed out in the hope of putting the Indien under Jones, that ship still remaining in Holland, in a species of political durance. She was not released, until England declared war against Holland, when the arrangement was made with South Carolina, as already mentioned.

The squadron left the roads of Groix, the second time, early on the morning of August 15th, 1779. One day out, it recaptured a large Dutch ship, laden with French property. In consequence of some misunderstanding with the commander of the Monsieur, which grew out of the disposition of this prize, that ship separated from the other vessels, which saw her

no more. The Monsieur was subsequently captured by the enemy, and, as is believed, on this cruise. On the 20th, a brig, from Limerick to London, was taken, and ordered in.

The 23d, the squadron was off Cape Clear, having doubled Scilly, and passed up the west coast of England, in the intervening time. Here it fell calm, and Jones sent several of the Richard's boats to seize a brig that was lying some distance to the north-west. As evening approached, he found it necessary to place his own barge in the water, containing a cockswain and six men, to keep the ship's head off shore. The brig was captured, and towed toward the squadron. Just at this moment, the men in the barge cut the tow-line, and pulled for the shore. Several shots were fired at the fugitives, but without effect. Seeing this, Mr. Cutting Lunt, who appears to have been with the prize, took four soldiers in a boat, and pursued the deserters, becoming lost in a fog. The Richard fired guns, as signals to the master, but he never returned. Counting himself, there were seventeen persons in his boat, making a total loss to the Richard, including the fugitives, of twenty-four men. It is now known that, on the morning of the 23d, (civil time,) the seven men landed at Ballinskellix, in the county of Kerry, and that the other boat landed at the same place, the same day, about one, in pursuit. Mr. Lunt and his people were arrested, and sent to Mill prison. Jones intimates that he understood his master died in that place of confinement, but, in this, he was misinformed. Mr. Lunt was liberated, in the course of a year or two, and was subsequently lost at sea. This was Cutting Lunt, it will

be remembered; his kinsman, Henry Lunt, still remaining in the ship, as her second lieutenant. Through the reports of the deserters and prisoners, the character of the squadron, which was plainly visible as soon as the fog dispersed, became known on shore, and its presence created great uneasiness. The linen ships were supposed to be Jones' object, and precautions were taken accordingly. It is worthy of remark, that Jones states, the master saw the *Cerf*, inshore, whither she had been sent to reconnoitre, and to look for the missing boats, but the cutter showed English colors, and fired at the boat, which induced Mr. Lunt to land, as a last resort. To add to the misfortune, the cutter herself got separated in the fog, and did not rejoin the squadron.

It was at this time, that Jones had a serious quarrel with his second in command, M. Landais. Insubordination soon began seriously to show itself; the conduct of the *Cerf* being very unaccountable. She went back to France. It is probable that the loss of so many men induced the French officers to distrust the fidelity of the *Richard's* crew; and it is known that this distrust influenced the conduct of the *Pallas*, on a most trying occasion, a few weeks later. On the 26th, the *Grande-ville* was sent in, with a prize. This reduced the force of the squadron to four vessels, viz., the *Richard*, *Alliance*, *Pallas*, and *Vengeance*.

It was the intention of Jones to remain a week longer off Cape Clear, but Capt. Landais seemed so apprehensive of the approach of a superior force, that he yielded to the opinion of his subordinate. On the 26th, it blowed fresh; the commodore accordingly made the

signal to stand to the northward, the Alliance parting company the same night. On the 31st, the Richard, Pallas, and Vengeance, were off Cape Wrath, the north-western extremity of the island of Great Britain, where the former captured a heavy Letter-of-Marque, of twenty-two guns, laden with naval stores for the enemy's vessels on the American lakes. While this ship was chasing, the Alliance hove in sight, and joined in the chase, having another Letter-of-Marque in company, a prize. These two ships were manned from the Alliance, at Landais' request; and the latter sent them into Norway, contrary to orders, where both were restored to the English by the Danish government. On the night of the 8th, the Alliance again parted company, in a gale of wind.

Jones kept well off the land, the weather being thick, and the wind foul. On the 13th, however, the Cheviot Hills, in the south-eastern part of Scotland, became visible, and the commodore now seriously set about the execution of some of his larger plans. His intention was to land at Leith, the port of Edinburgh itself, and, not only to lay the place under contribution, but to seize the shipping he might find in the Forth. He had hopes that even the Scottish capital might be frightened into a temporary submission. This was a highly characteristic project, and one worthy of the military audacity of the man. Its great merit, in addition to its boldness and importance, was its strong probability of success. The late Com. Dale, who was to act a most important part in the enterprise, and who was a man of singular simplicity and moderation of character and temperament, assured the writer that he

never could see any reason why the attack should have been defeated, beyond the obstacle that actually arose. Jones himself intimates that his two *colleagues*, present, (for so he bitterly styled his captains, in consequence of the terms of the *concordat*,) threw cold water on his views, until he pointed out to them the probable amount of the contributions of two such places as Leith and Edinburgh. A delay occurred, moreover, in consequence of the momentary absence of the Pallas and Vengeance, which vessels had given chase to the southward, a circumstance that compelled the Richard to quit the Forth, after she had entered it alone, and this at a moment when she might have secured a twenty-gun ship and two cutters, all of which were lying in Leith roads, unsuspecting of danger; though it would have compelled him to abandon the other and principal objects of the attempt. In order to join his consorts, and consult his captains, therefore, Jones was compelled to quit the Forth, after having once entered it. It appears he had found a man ready to give him information, but the golden opportunity was lost, in consequence of the doubts and misgivings of his subordinates.

Still Jones determined to make the attempt. On the 15th, the Richard, Pallas, and Vengeance, entered the Forth in company, turning up with the tide, against a head wind. By this time the alarm had been given on shore, and guns were mounted at Leith, to receive the strangers. A cutter had been watching the squadron for several hours, also; but Jones deemed all this immaterial. The ships had got up as high as Inchkeith, the island which shelters the roads seaward, and the boats were in the water and manned. Mr. Dale, who was to

superintend and command the maritime part of the debarkation, had received his instructions, and was on the point of descending into his boat, when a squall struck the ships, and induced an order to take the people from the boats, to clue up and clue down. Jones held on against the wind as long as he found it possible, but, the squall turning to a gale, he was compelled to bear up before it, and was driven out of the Frith again, at a much faster rate than he had entered it. The gale was short, but so severe that one of the prizes in company foundered. It moderated in the afternoon, but Jones having plainly seen the cutter watching him, conceived it too late to hope for a surprise, his only rational ground for expecting success.

It is a proof how much doubt existed concerning the true character of Jones' vessels, among the people on shore, that a member of parliament sent off, to the Richard, a messenger, to ask for powder and shot ; stating that he had heard Paul Jones was on the coast, and that he wished to be ready for him. A barrel of powder was sent in answer, but the "honorable gentleman" was told the vessel had no shot of the size he requested. On this occasion, the ships were seen turning up the Forth, as they stood in quite near to the north shore, and, it being Sunday, thousands were out viewing the scene, which caused a great clamor, and made a deep impression.\*

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\* The Edinburgh Review, in an article on Cooper's History of the Navy, which has been pretty effectually answered, gives its readers reason to suppose that Jones' appearance on the coast produced no uneasiness. Sir Walter Scott told the writer he well remembered the feeling excited by this event, and that it was widespread and general. As Scott was born in 1769, his recollection might be relied on.

Jones had now fresh projects to annoy the enemy; designs on Hull or Newcastle, as is thought. His captains, however, refused to sustain him, and he was reluctantly obliged to abandon his plans. His object was glory; theirs appears to have been profit. It ought to be mentioned, that all the young officers sustained the commodore, and professed a readiness to follow wherever he would lead. Jones had a respect for the opinion of Capt. Cottineau, of the *Pallas*, and it is believed he yielded more to his persuasions than to those of all the rest of his commanders. This officer seemed to think any delay of moment would bring a superior force against them. The commodore viewed the matter more coolly, well knowing that the transmission of intelligence, and the collection of three or four vessels, was a matter that required some little time.

Between the 17th and 21st, many colliers and coasters were captured. Most of them were sunk, though one or two were released, and a sloop was ransomed by the *Pallas*, contrary to orders. On the latter day, the ships were off Flamborough Head, where the *Pallas* chased to the north-east, leaving the *Richard* and *Vengeance* in pursuit of vessels in a directly opposite quarter. Jones overtook and sunk a collier, late in the afternoon. Several craft then hove in sight, and one was chased ashore. Soon after, a brig from Holland was captured, and, at daylight, next morning, a considerable fleet was seen inshore, which kept aloof, on account of the appearance of the *Bon Homme Richard*. Finding it impossible to decoy them out, Jones used some artifices to delude a pilot, and two boats came alongside.

The pilots were deceived, and gave Jones all the information they possessed.

As it was now impracticable to bring the shipping out of the Humber, on account of the state of the wind and tide, and the Pallas not being in sight, the commodore turned his attention to looking for his consorts. He hauled off the land, therefore, making the best of his way back to Flamborough Head, after passing several hours in endeavoring to entice the ships out of the Humber.

In the course of the night of the 22d, two ships were seen, and chased for several hours, when, finding himself near them, Jones hove-to, about three in the morning, waiting for light. When the day returned, the strangers were found to be the Pallas and the Alliance; the latter of which had not been seen since she parted company off Cape Wrath.

After communicating with his consorts, Jones chased a brig that was lying-to to windward. About meridian, however, a large ship was observed coming round Flamborough Head, when Mr. Henry Lunt, the second lieutenant of the Richard, was thrown into one of the pilot boats, with fifteen men, and ordered to seize the brig, while the Richard made sail toward the strange ship. Soon after, a fleet of forty-one sail was seen stretching out from behind the Head, bearing N. N. E. from the Richard. The wind was light at the southward, and these vessels were a convoy from the Baltic, turning down the North Sea, towards the Straits of Dover, bound to London. This placed Jones to windward and a little in shore, if the projection of the headland be excepted.



As soon as the commodore ascertained that he was in the vicinity of this fleet, he made a signal of recall to the pilot boat, and another of a general chase to his squadron. The first was probably unseen or disregarded, for it was not obeyed : and the officer and men in the pilot boat remained out of their vessel during most of the trying scenes of that eventful day. As twenty-four officers and men had been captured, or had deserted, off Cape Clear, these sixteen increased the number of absentees to forty ; if to these we add some who had been sent away in prizes, the crew of the *Richard*, which consisted of but three hundred and eighty, all told, the day she sailed, was now diminished to little more than three hundred souls, of whom a large proportion were the *quasi* marines, or soldiers, who had entered for the cruise.

Jones now crossed royal yards and made sail for the convoy. He had intelligence of this fleet, and knew that it was under the charge of Capt. Pearson, of the *Serapis* 44, who had the *Countess of Scarborough* 20, Capt. Piercy, in company. As the scene we are about to relate is one memorable in naval annals, it may be well to mention the force of the vessels engaged.

That of the *Richard* has been already given. The *Pallas* mounted thirty guns, of light calibre, and was perhaps more than a third heavier than the *Scarborough*, the vessel she subsequently engaged. The *Alliance* was a large thirty-two, mounting forty guns, mostly twelve pounders. She had a full, but indifferent crew of about 300 souls, when she left the Roads of Groix, of which near, if not quite, fifty were absent in prizes.

Of the *Vengeance*, which had no part in the events of the day, it is unnecessary to speak.

On the part of the enemy, many of the convoy were armed, and, by acting in concert, they might have given a good deal of occupation to the *Pallas* and *Vengeance*, while the two men-of-war fought the *Richard* and *Alliance*. As it was, however, all of these ships sought safety in flight. The *Serapis* was a new vessel, that both sailed and worked well, of a class that was then a good deal used in the North Sea, Baltic, and the narrow waters generally; and which was sometimes brought into the line, in battles between the short ships that were much preferred, in that day, in all the seas mentioned. She was a 44, on two decks; having an armament below of 20 eighteens; one of 20 nines, on the upper gun-deck; and one of 10 sixes, on her quarter-deck and forecastle. This is believed to have been her real force, though Jones speaks of her, in one place, as having been pierced for 56 instead of 50 guns. The former was the usual force of what was called a fifty-gun ship, or a vessel like the *Leander*, which assailed the *Chesapeake* in 1807. Sands, the most original writer of authority on the subject of Paul Jones, or of any reasoning powers of much weight, infers from some of his calculations and information that the *Serapis* had 400 souls on board her at the commencement of the action which is now to be related. The English accounts state her crew to have been 320; a number that is quite sufficient for her metal and spars, and which is more in conformity with the practice of the English marine. The *Indiamen*, stated by Sands to have been obtained by Capt. Pearson, in Copenhagen, may have

been 15 Lascars, who are known to have been on board, and to have been included in the 320 souls. It is not probable that the crews of the *Richard* and *Serapis* differed a dozen in number. The *Countess of Scarborough* was a hired ship in the British navy, differing in no respect from a regular man-of-war, except in the circumstance that she belonged to a private owner instead of the king. This was not unusual in that marine, the circumstance being rather in favor of the qualities of the vessel, since the admiralty, on the coast of England, would not be likely to hire any but a good ship. Her officers and people belonged to the navy, as a matter of course. There is a trifling discrepancy as to the force of the *Scarborough*, though the point is of no great moment, under the circumstances. Jones states that she was a ship mounting 24 guns on *one* deck, while other accounts give her armament as 22 guns in all. She probably had a crew of from 120 to 150 men.

As soon as the leading English vessels saw that strangers, and probably enemies, were to the southward, and to windward, they gave the alarm, by firing guns, letting fly their top-gallant sheets, tacking together, and making the best of their way in toward the land again. At this moment the men-of-war were astern, with a view to keep the convoy in its place; and being near the shore, the authorities of *Scarborough* had sent a boat off to the *Serapis*, to apprise her commander of the presence of Paul Jones' fleet. By these means, the two senior officers were fully aware with whom they had to contend. Capt. Pearson fired two guns, and showed the proper signals, in order to call in his leading ships,

but, as is very customary with merchant vessels, the warning and orders were unattended to, until the danger was seen to be pressing. While the merchantmen were gathered in behind the Head, or ran off to leeward, the Serapis signaled the Scarborough to follow, and stood gallantly out to sea, on the starboard tack, hugging the wind.

Jones now threw out a signal to his own vessels to form the line of battle. The Alliance, which ought to have dropped in astern of the Richard, paid no attention to this order, though she approached the enemy to reconnoitre. In passing the Pallas, Capt. Landais remarked that if the larger of the enemy's ships proved to be a fifty-gun ship, all they had to do was to endeavor to escape ! This was not the best possible disposition with which to commence the action. Soon after the Pallas spoke the Richard, and asked for orders. Jones directed her to lead toward the enemy, but the order was not obeyed, as will be seen by what followed.

The wind being light, several hours passed before the different evolutions mentioned could be carried into execution. As soon as Capt. Pearson found himself outside of all his convoy, and the latter out of danger, he tacked in shore, with a view to cover the merchantmen. This change of course induced Jones to ware and carry sail, with a view to cut him off from the land. By this time it was evening, and this sudden change of course, on the part of the Serapis, seems to have given rise to a distrust, on the part of Capt. Cottineau, of the Pallas, concerning the control she was under. There were so many disaffected men in the Richard, English and other Europeans, that the security of the

ship appears to have been a matter of doubt among all the other vessels. When those on board the *Pallas*, therefore, perceived the *Richard* crowding sail inshore, they believed Jones was killed by his own people, and that the mutineers had run away with the ship, intending to carry her into a British port. With this impression, Capt. Cottineau hauled his wind, tacked, and laid the *Pallas*' head off shore. In consequence of this manœuvre, and of the *Vengeance*'s being far astern, nothing like a line was formed on this occasion.

Jones' object was to cut his enemy off from the land. Keeping this in view, he pressed down in the *Richard*, regardless of his consorts, passing the *Alliance* lying-to, out of gun-shot, on the weather quarter of the principal English ship. It was now dark, but Jones watched his enemy with a night-glass, and perceiving that he could cut off the *Serapis* from getting under the guns of Scarborough Castle, he continued to approach the Englishman under a press of sail. Soon after the *Pallas* wore round and followed. The *Vengeance* had directions to order the pilot-boat back, and then to pick up the convoy; but as these last were inshore, and tolerably safe, she seems to have done little, or nothing. In the action that ensued, she took no part whatever.

It was half-past seven, or eight o'clock, when the *Richard* and *Serapis* drew near to each other. The former was to windward, both vessels being on the larboard tack. The *Serapis* hailed, demanding "What ship is that?" "I can't hear what you say," was returned from the *Richard*. "What ship is that?" repeated the Englishman—"answer immediately, or I shall be under the necessity of firing into you." The

Richard now delivered her broadside, which was returned from the *Serapis* so promptly as to render the two discharges nearly simultaneous. In an instant, the two ships were enveloped in smoke and darkness. The *Richard* backed her topsails, in order to deaden her way and keep her station to windward. She then filled, and passed ahead of the *Serapis*, crossing her bows, becalming the *Serapis* partially. The latter was a short ship, and worked quick. She was, moreover, a good sailer, and Capt. Pearson keeping his luff, as soon as his canvas filled again, he came up on the weather quarter of Jones, taking the wind out of his sails; both vessels fighting the other broadsides, or using the starboard guns of the *Serapis* and the larboard of the *Richard*. It will be remembered that the *Richard* had six eighteens mounted in her gun-room. As the water was smooth, Jones relied greatly on the service of this battery, which, in fact, was his principal dependence with an adversary like the *Serapis*. Unfortunately two of these old, defective pieces burst at the first discharge, blowing up the main-deck above them, beside killing and wounding many men. The alarm was so great as to destroy all confidence in these guns, which made but eight discharges in all, when their crews abandoned them. This, in addition to the actual damage done, was a most serious disadvantage. It reduced the *Richard's* armament at once to 32 guns, or, as some authorities say, to 34; leaving her with the metal of a 32 gun frigate, to contend with a full-manned and full-armed 44. The combat, now, was in fact between an eighteen-pounder and a twelve-pounder ship; an inequality of metal, to say nothing of that in guns,

that seemed to render the chance of the *Richard* nearly hopeless.

Half an hour was consumed in these preliminary evolutions, the wind being light, and the vessels nearly stationary a part of the time. When the *Richard* first approached her adversary, it will be remembered she was quite alone, the *Vengeance* having been left leagues behind, the *Alliance* lying-to, out of gun-shot, to windward, and the *Pallas* not bearing up until her commander had ascertained there was no mutiny on board the commodore, by seeing him commence the action. All this time the Countess of Scarborough was coming up, and she now closed so near as to be able to assist her consort. The Americans affirm that this ship did fire at least one raking broadside at the *Richard*, doing her some injury. On the other hand, Capt. Piercy, her commander, states that he was afraid to engage, as the smoke and obscurity rendered it impossible for him to tell friend from enemy. It is possible that both accounts are true, Capt. Piercy meaning merely to excuse his subsequent course after having fired once or twice at the *Richard*. At all events, the connection of this vessel with the battle between the two principal ships must have been very trifling, as she soon edged away to a distance, and, after exchanging a distant broadside or two with the *Alliance*, she was brought to close action by the *Pallas*, which ship compelled her to strike, after a creditable resistance of an hour's duration. This vessel fully occupied the *Pallas*, first in engaging her, then in securing the prisoners, until after the conflict terminated.

When the *Serapis* came up on the weather quarter



of the *Richard*, as has been mentioned, she kept her luff, passing slowly by, until she found herself so far ahead and to windward, as to induce Capt. Pearson to think he could fall broad off, cross the *Richard*'s fore foot, and rake her. This manœuvre was attempted, but finding there was not room to effect her purpose, the *Serapis* came to the wind again, as fast as she could, in order to prevent going foul. This uncertain movement brought the two ships in a line, the *Serapis* leading. It so far deadened the way of the English ship, that the *Richard* ran into her, on her weather quarter. In this situation neither vessel could fire, nor could either crew board, the collision being necessarily gentle, and nothing touching but the jib-boom of the American. In this state the two vessels remained a minute or two.

While in this singular position, the firing having entirely ceased, and it being quite dark, a voice from the *Serapis* demanded of the *Richard*, if she had struck. Jones answered promptly, "I have not yet begun to fight." As the ships had now been engaged nearly, or quite, an hour, this was not very encouraging, certainly, to the Englishman's hope of victory, though he immediately set about endeavoring to secure it. The yards of the *Serapis* were trimmed on the larboard tack, and her sails were full as the *Richard* touched her; the latter ship bracing all aback, the two vessels soon parted. As soon as Jones thought he had room, he filled on the other tack, and drew ahead again. The *Serapis*, however, most probably with a view of passing close athwart, either the *Richard*'s fore foot or stern, luffed into the wind, laid all aback forward, and keeping her helm down while she shivered her after sails, she



attempted to break round off on her heel. At this moment, Jones seeing his enemy coming down, thought he might lay him athwart hawse, and drew ahead with that object. In the smoke and obscurity, the moon not having yet risen, each party miscalculated his distance, and just before the *Serapis* had begun to come up on the other tack, her jib-boom passed in over the *Richard's* poop, getting foul of the mizzen rigging. Jones was perfectly satisfied, by this time, that he had no chance in a cannonade, and gladly seized the opportunity of grappling. He had sent the acting master for a hawser as soon as he perceived what was likely to occur, but it not arriving in time, with his own hands he lashed the enemy's bowsprit to the *Richard's* mizzen-mast, by means of the *Serapis'* rigging that had been shot away, and which was hanging loose beneath the spar. Other fastenings soon made all secure.\*

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\* Capt. Mackenzie, in his life of Paul Jones, has the following, in a note, p. 183, vol. 1, viz.: "As considerable difference will be observable between the account of this battle, given in Mr. Cooper's '*Naval History*,' and the above, (meaning his own account of the action,) it is proper to state that Mr. Cooper has followed Mr. Dale's description of the manœuvres antecedent to the ship's being grappled; whilst in the present account more reliance has been placed on those of the two commanders who directed the evolutions. Mr. Dale was stationed on the *Richard's* main-deck, in a comparatively unfavorable position for observing the manœuvres. The evolution of box-hauling his ship, ascribed by Mr. Cooper to Capt. Pearson, would, under the circumstances, have been highly unseamanlike."

In answer to this, the writer has to say, that he nowhere finds any reason for thinking that either of the commanders contradicts his account; and as the late Com. Dale, in a long personal interview, minutely described all the manœuvres of the two vessels, as he has here given them, he feels bound to believe him. The argu-

The wind being light, the movements of the two vessels were slow in proportion. It was owing to this circumstance, and to the fact that the *Serapis* was just beginning to gather way as she came foul, that the col-

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ment that Mr. Dale could not see what he described, is fallacious, since an officer in command of a gun-deck, finding no enemy on either beam, would naturally look for him, and by putting his head out of a forward port, Mr. Dale might have got a better view of the *Serapis* than any above him. But Com. Dale states a thing *distinctly and affirmatively*, and with such a witness, the writer feels bound much more to respect his direct assertions, than any of the very extraordinary theories in history, of which Capt. Mackenzie has been the propagator. The manœuvres were probably discussed, too, between the younger officers, after the surrender of the *Serapis*. The writer dissents, also, to Capt. Mackenzie's views of seamanship. Bringing ships round *before the wind*, in the manner described, was far more practised in 1779 than it is to-day. It was more practised with the short ships of the narrow seas than with any other. The *river vessels*, in particular, frequently did it twenty or thirty times in a single trip up the Thames, or into the Nore. The writer has seen it done himself a hundred times in those waters. Many reasons may have induced Capt. Pearson to practice what, with a Baltic and London ship, must have been a common manœuvre, especially with a master on board who was doubtless a channel pilot. He might have wished at first to preserve the weather-gage; he might not have desired to take the room necessary to ware with his helm hard-a-weather, or might have attempted to tack, and failing on account of the lightness of the wind, or the want of sufficient headway, brought his ship round as described. For the writer, it is sufficient that a seaman and a moralist like Richard Dale has deliberately told him in detail, that this manœuvre was practiced, to upset the vague conjectures of a historian of the calibre of Capt. Mackenzie. A published statement from Com. Dale is given by another writer, in which that truth-loving and truth-telling old officer is made to say, "The *Serapis* wore short round on *her heel*, and her jib-boom ran into the mizzen rigging of the *Bon Homme Richard*." This is giving in brief what he gave to the writer in detail.

lision itself did little damage. As soon as Capt. Pearson perceived he was foul, he dropped an anchor under foot, in the hope that the *Richard* would drift clear of him. The fastenings having been already made, this result was not obtained; and the ships tending to the tide, which was now in the same direction with the wind, the latter brought the stern of the *Serapis* close in, alongside of the bows of the *Richard*. In this position the ships became so interlocked, by means of their spars, spare anchors, and other protruding objects, for the moment, as to become inseparable.

As the stern of the *Serapis* swung round, her lower deck ports were lowered, in order to prevent being boarded. The ships' sides touching, or at least being so close as to prevent the ports from being opened again, the guns were fired inboard, blowing away the lids. This was renewing the action, under circumstances which, in ordinary cases, would have soon brought it to a termination. Wherever a gun bore, it necessarily cleared all before it, and, in reloading, the rammers were frequently passed into a hostile port, in order to be entered into the muzzles of their proper guns. It is evident that such a conflict could be maintained only under very extraordinary circumstances.

The eighteens of the *Serapis* soon destroyed every thing within their range, nor was it long before the main-deck guns of the *Richard* were, in a great measure, silenced. A considerable number of the men who had been at the eighteens of the *Richard's* gun-room, had remained below after their pieces were abandoned, but the heavy fire of the *Serapis' lower* guns soon started them up, and joining some of those who had been driven

away from the twelves, they got upon the forecastle. As the *Richard* was a longer ship than the *Serapis*, this point was comparatively safe, and thence a fire of musketry was kept up on the enemy's tops and decks. These men, also, threw grenades. The tops, too, were not idle, but kept up a smart fire of muskets, and the men began to resort to grenades also.

In this stage of the action, the *Serapis* had the cannonading nearly to herself. All her guns, with the exception of those on the quarter-deck and forecastle, appear to have been worked, while, on the part of the *Richard*, the fire was reduced to two nines on the quarter-deck, two or three of the twelves, and the musketry. The consequences were, that the *Richard* was nearly torn to pieces below, while the upper part of the *Serapis* was deserted, with the exception of a few officers. Capt. Pearson himself appears to have sent his people from the quarter-deck guns. An advantage of this sort, once gained, was easily maintained, rendering it virtually impossible for the losing party to recover the ground it had lost.

The moon rose about the time the ships came foul. Until this occurred, the *Alliance* had not been near the principal combatants. She now passed some distance to leeward, and crossed the bows of the *Richard* and the stern of the *Serapis*, firing at such a distance as rendered it impossible for her to make sure of her enemy, even if she knew which was which. As soon as her guns ceased to bear, she up helm, and ran a considerable distance farther to leeward, hovering about until the *Scarborough* submitted. Capt. Landais now spoke the *Pallas*, when Capt. Cottineau begged him to go to

the assistance of the *Richard*, offering, at the same time, to go himself if the *Alliance* would take charge of his prize. All these facts appear under oath in the course of the controversy which grew out of the events of this memorable night.

Ashamed to remain idle at such a moment, and in the face of such remonstrances, Capt. Landais hauled up, under very easy canvas, however, for the two combatants, and making a couple of stretches under his topsails, he passed the bows of the *Serapis* and stern of the *Richard*, opening with *grape*, the last shot to be used under such circumstances; then keeping away a little, he certainly fired into the *Richard*'s larboard quarter, or that most distant from the enemy. Some of the witnesses even affirm that this fire was maintained until the *Alliance* had actually passed the *Richard*'s beam, on her way to leeward.

These movements of the *Alliance* induced Sands aptly to term that frigate the comet of this bloody system. It is difficult to account for her evolutions, without supposing treachery, or insanity, on the part of her commander. For the latter supposition there are some grounds, his subsequent deportment inducing the government to put him out of employment, as a man at least partially deranged. Still it is difficult to suppose the officers would allow their men to fire into the *Richard*'s quarter, as mentioned, unless they mistook the ship. On the other hand, it is affirmed by the witnesses that three lanterns were shown on the off side of the *Richard*, the regular signal of reconnoissance; that fifty voices called out, begging their friends to cease firing, and this, too, when so near that the remonstrances

must have been heard. By direction of Jones, an officer hailed, too, and ordered Landais to lay the enemy aboard. A question was then put to ascertain whether the order was understood, and an answer was given in the affirmative.

The effect of this transit of the Alliance was very disastrous to the Richard. Her fire dismounted a gun or two on board the latter ship, extinguished several lanterns, did a good deal of mischief aloft, and induced many of the people to desert their quarters, under the impression that the English on board the Alliance had got possession of the ship, and were aiding the enemy. It is, indeed, an important feature in the peculiarities of this remarkable cruise, and one that greatly enhances the merit of the man who used such discordant materials, that the two principal vessels distrusted each other's ability to look down revolt, and were distrusted by all the rest, on account of the same supposed insecurity. It may be added as one of the difficulties in explaining Capt. Landais' conduct, that the moon had now been up some time, and that it was very easy to distinguish the ships by their off sides; that of the Serapis having two yellow streaks, dotted as usual with ports, while the Richard was all black.

Not satisfied with what he had done, Capt. Landais shortly after made his re-appearance, approaching the Richard on her off side, running athwart her bows this time, and crossing the stern of her antagonist. On this occasion, it is affirmed, her fire commenced when there was no possibility of reaching the Serapis, unless it were through the Richard; and her fire, of grape especially, was particularly destructive to the men collected

on the *Richard's* forecastle. At this spot alone, ten or twelve men appear to have been killed or wounded, at a moment when the fire of the *Serapis* could not possibly injure them. Among those slain, was a midshipman of the name of Caswell, who affirmed with his dying breath that he had been hit by the shot of the *Alliance*. After this last exploit, Capt. Landais seemed satisfied with his own efforts, and appeared no more.

While these erratic movements were in course of execution by the *Alliance* and her eccentric, if not insane, commander, the two ships engaged lay canopied by smoke, a scene of fierce contention, and of accumulated dangers. The alarm of fire was succeeded by reports that the *Richard* was sinking. To these sources of apprehension, soon followed that of the dread of a rising within. The accession of water in the hold induced the master-at-arms to release the English prisoners on board, who were more than a hundred in number. As if this were not enough, the ships began to take fire from the explosions of the guns and grenades, and the combatants were frequently called from their quarters, in order to extinguish the flames. Capt. Pearson states, that the *Serapis* was on fire no less than twelve times, while the ships lay grappled; and, as to the *Richard*, in addition to several accidents of this nature that were promptly suppressed, for the last hour she was burning the whole time, the flames having got within her ceilings.

Jones was not a little astonished to see more than a hundred English mariners rushing up from below, at a moment when a heavy ship of their country was lashed alongside, and deliberately pouring her fire into his



own vessel. Such a circumstance might have proved fatal, with a man less resolute and self-possessed. Lieut. Dale had been below, in person, to ascertain the state of the hold, and it was found that several heavy shot had struck beneath the water line, and that the danger from that source was in truth serious. Profiting by the alarm that prevailed among the prisoners, the commodore set the Englishmen at work at the pumps, where they toiled with commendable zeal near an hour! Had they been so disposed, or cool, most of them might have escaped on board the *Serapis*.

The precise situations of the two vessels, and of the *Richard* in particular, are worthy of a passing remark. As for the *Serapis*, her injuries were far from great. She had suffered from the fire of her opponent at the commencement of the fight, it is true, but the bursting of the *Richard*'s eighteens, and her own superior working and better sailing had given her such essential advantages as, added to her heavier fire, must have long before decided the affair in her favor, but for the circumstance of the two vessels getting foul of each other. The quiet determination of Jones not to give up, might have protracted the engagement longer than usual, but it could hardly have averted the result. The vessels were no sooner square alongside, however, than the English ship's heavy guns swept away every thing in their front. This superiority in the way of artillery could not be overcome, and continued to the close of the engagement. Under any thing like ordinary circumstances, this ascendancy must have given the victory to the English, but Jones was a man calculated by nature, and his habits of thinking, to take refuge against



a defeat in extraordinary circumstances. He had succeeded in driving the enemy from above board, and was, in this stage of the action, diligently working two nine-pounders, in the hope of cutting away the Serapis' main-mast. Had he succeeded in this effort, no doubt he would have cut the lashings, and, obtaining a more favorable position on the bow or quarter of his enemy, settled the matter with his main-deck battery. Still, it required many shot, of the weight of his, to bring down so large a spar, with most of its rigging standing, and in smooth water. No one knows what would have been the result, but for the coolness and judgment of a seaman, who belonged to the main-top. As the English had been cleared out of their tops by the greater fire of the Richard's musketry, this man lay out on the main-yard, until he found himself at the sheet-block. Here he placed a bucket of grenades, and began deliberately to throw them upon the Serapis' decks, wherever he saw two or three men collected. Finding no one on the quarter-deck, or forecastle, to annoy, he tossed his grenades into the hatches, where they produced considerable confusion and injury. At length, he succeeded in getting one or two down upon the lower gun-deck, where one of them set fire to some loose powder. It appears that the powder boys had laid a row of cartridges on the off side of this deck, in readiness for use, no shot entering from the Richard to molest. To this act of gross negligence, Capt. Pearson probably owed the loss of his ship. The lower gun-deck of the Serapis had been perfectly safe from all annoyance, from the moment the ships got foul, no gun of the Richard's bearing on it, while the deck above

protected it effectually from musketry. To this security, it is probable, the dire catastrophe which succeeded was owing. The powder that ignited set fire to all these uncovered cartridges, and the explosion extended from the main-mast aft. It silenced every gun in that part of the ship, and indeed nearly stripped them of their crews. More than twenty men were killed outright, leaving on many of them nothing but the waistbands of their duck trowsers, and the collars and wristbands of their shirts. Quite sixty of the *Serapis*' people must have been placed *hors de combat*, in a moment, by this fell assault. The reader may imagine its effects on a lower gun-deck, choked with smoke, with the ship on fire, amid the shrieks and groans of the living sufferers.

It is now known that the English would have struck, soon after this accident occurred, had not the master of the London Letter of Marque, captured off Cape Wrath, passed out of a port of the *Richard* into one of the *Serapis*' and announced that the American ship was in a still worse situation, having actually released her prisoners, as she was on the point of sinking. About this time, too, another incident occurred, that aided in sustaining the hopes of Capt. Pearson. Two or three of the warrant officers of the *Richard*, when they found the ship in danger of sinking, had looked in vain for Jones, and Mr. Dale being below at that moment, examining into the state of the pumps, they determined that it was their duty to strike the colors, in order to save the lives of the survivors. Luckily, the ensign had been shot away, and the gunner, who had run up on the poop to lower it, called out for quarter. Hearing

this, Capt. Pearson demanded if the *Richard* had struck. Jones answered for himself in the negative, but in such a way that he was not either heard or understood, and the English actually mustered a party of boarders to take possession of their prize. As this was giving Jones' men a better chance with their muskets, the English were soon driven below again, with loss. Some of the latter, however, appeared on the sides of the *Richard*.

These reverses turned the tide of battle in favor of the Americans. The latter got a gun or two more at work, and, while the fire of their adversaries was sensibly diminishing, their own began to increase. The spirit of the Englishman drooped, and he finally hauled down his colors with his own hands, after the ships had been lashed together nearly, if not quite, two hours and a half. The main-yard of the *Serapis* was hanging a-cock-bill, the brace being shot away, and the brace pendant within reach. Lieut. Dale seized the latter and swung himself over upon the quarter-deck of the *Serapis*. Here he found Capt. Pearson quite alone, and received his submission. At this instant, the first lieutenant of the English ship came up from below, and inquired if the *Richard* had struck, her fire having now entirely ceased. Mr. Dale explained to this officer how the case stood, when, finding his own commander confirmed it, the lieutenant offered to go below, and to stop the guns that were still at work in the *Serapis*. Mr. Dale objected, however, and these two officers were immediately passed over to the quarter-deck of the *Richard*. A party of officers and men had followed Mr. Dale from his own ship, and one of them, a Mr.

Mayrant, of South Carolina, one of the Richard's midshipmen, was actually run through the thigh by a boarding spike; the blow coming from a party of boarders stationed on the main-deck. This was the last blood spilt on the occasion, the firing being stopped immediately afterward.

Thus ended the renowned conflict between the *Serapis* and the *Bon Homme Richard*; one of the most remarkable of naval annals, in some of its features, though far from being as comparatively bloody, or as well fought in others, as many that may be cited. Com. Dale, who was familiar with the facts, always placed the combat between the *Trumbull* and *Watt*, before that between these two ships, in the way of a cannonade; nor was there much difference in the comparative loss of the English vessels, the *Watt* having about half her crew killed and wounded, which was not far from the casualties of the *Serapis*. Still, this battle must ever stand alone, in a few of its leading incidents. There is no other instance on record of two vessels, carrying such batteries, remaining foul of each other for so long a period. It could have happened in this case, only, through the circumstances that the *Richard* had the combat nearly all to herself above board, while the *Serapis* was tearing her to pieces below decks. The respective combatants were, in truth, out of the range of each other's fire, in a great degree; else would the struggle have been brought to a termination in a very few minutes. The party that was first silenced must have soon submitted; and, as that was virtually the American ship, the victory would have belonged to the English, in any other circumstances than those which

actually occurred. As for the cannonading that Jones kept up for more than an hour on the main-mast of the *Serapis*, it could have had no material influence on the result, since the mast stood until the ship had struck, coming down just as the two vessels separated.

An examination into the injuries sustained by the respective combatants, proves the truth of the foregoing theory. As for the *Richard*, she had suffered a good deal during the first hour, or before the vessels closed, receiving several heavy shot between wind and water. Some shot, too, it would seem to be certain, were received in the same awkward places, from the fire of the *Alliance*, after the ships had grappled. But, the most extraordinary part of her injuries were those which were found from the main-mast aft, below the quarter-deck. Perhaps no vessel ever suffered in a degree approaching that in which the *Richard* suffered in this part of her. Her side was almost destroyed by the guns of the *Serapis*, and nothing prevented the quarter-deck, main-deck and poop from literally falling down upon the lower-deck, but a few top-timbers and upper futtocks that had fortunately escaped. This left Jones and his companions fighting on a sort of stage, upheld by stanchions that were liable at any moment to be carried away. Nothing, indeed, saved these supports, or the men on the deck above them, but the fact that they were all so near the enemy's guns, that the latter could not be trained, or elevated sufficiently high to hit them. It was the opinion of Com. Dale that the shot of the *Serapis*, for the last hour of the action, must have passed in at one side of the *Richard*, in this part of the ship, and out at the other, without touching any

thing, the previous fire having so effectually cleared the road!

The loss of men, in each ship, was fearfully great, and singularly equal. A muster-roll of the *Richard* has been preserved, which shows that, out of 227 souls on board when the ship sailed, exclusively of the soldiers, or marines, 83 were killed, or wounded. As many of these 227 persons were not in the action, while a few do not appear on this roll, who were on board, by placing the whole number of this portion of the crew at 200, we shall not be far out of the way. About 120 of the soldiers were in the combat, and this proportion would make such an additional loss, as to raise the whole number to 132. These soldiers, however, suffered in the commencement of the action more than the rest of the people, more especially a party of them that had been stationed on the poop; and, the reports of the day making the loss of the *Richard* 150 altogether, we are inclined to believe it was not far from the truth. This was very near one half of all the men she had engaged.

On the part of the English, Capt. Pearson reported 117 casualties, admitting, however, that there were many more. Jones thought his own loss less than that of the *Serapis*, and there is reason to think it may have been so, in a trifling degree. It is probable that something like one half of all the combatants suffered in this bloody affair, which is a very unusual number for any battle, whether by sea or land. Many of those who suffered by the two explosions—that of the *Richard*'s eighteens, and that of the *Serapis*' cartridges—died of their injuries.

To return to the state of the two vessels, and the events of the night: Jones no sooner found himself in possession of his prize, than he ordered the lashings cut in order to separate the vessels. This was done without much difficulty, the wind and tide, in a few minutes, carrying the *Richard* clear of her late antagonist. The *Serapis* was hailed, and ordered to follow the commodore. In order to do this, her head-yards were braced sharp aback, to cause the vessel to pay off, her main-mast having come down, nearly by the board, bringing with it the mizzen top-mast. The wreck was cleared, but the ship still refused to answer her helm. Excited by this singular state of things, Mr. Dale sprang from a seat he had taken, and fell his length upon deck. He had been wounded in the foot, and now ascertained for the first time that he was unable to walk. Luckily, Mr. Lunt, with the pilot boat, had come alongside, as soon as the firing ceased, and was ready to take his place. The fact being communicated to this officer that the *Serapis* was anchored, the cable was cut, and Jones' orders obeyed. It is proper to add that the party in the pilot boat were of great service, as soon as they got on board again.

The vessels of the squadron now collected together, and fresh men were obtained from her consorts, to attend to the critical wants of the *Richard*. That ship, it will be remembered, was not only on fire, but sinking. Gangs of hands were obtained from the other vessels, to work the pumps, as well as to assist in extinguishing the flames, and the night passed in strenuous efforts to effect their purposes. So critical was the condition of the vessel, however, that many men threw themselves

into the water, and swam to the nearest ship, under an apprehension that the *Richard* might at any moment be blown up. In the course of this eventful night, too, eight or ten Englishmen, who had formed a part of Jones' own crew, stole a boat from the *Serapis*, and deserted, landing at Scarborough. Despair of ever being able to escape into a neutral or friendly port, was doubtless their motive ; and, in the circumstances, the reader can see the vast disadvantages under which Jones had achieved his success. A careful attention to all the difficulties, as well as dangers, that surrounded him, is necessary to a just appreciation of the character of our subject, whose exploits would have been deemed illustrious, if accomplished with means as perfect as those usually at the disposal of commanders in well established and regular marines. It is not to be forgotten, moreover, that Jones was personally so obnoxious to the anger of the English, as to render it certain that his treatment would be of the severest nature, in the event of his capture, if, indeed, he were allowed to escape with life. It was surely enough to meet an equal force of English seamen, on the high seas, favored by all the aids of perfect equipments and good vessels ; but, here, a desperate battle had been fought in sight of the English coast, against an enemy of means to render success doubtful, and with a reasonable probability that even victory might be the means of destroying the conqueror.

Many a man will face death manfully, when he presents himself in the form of a declared enemy, in open fight, who will manifest a want of the highest moral qualities which distinguish true courage, when driven to a just appreciation of the risks of an unseen source



of alarm. It is this cool discrimination between real and imaginary difficulties and dangers, which distinguishes the truly great commander from him who is suited only to the emergencies of every-day service; and when, as in the case of Jones, this ability to discriminate, and to resist unnecessary alarms, is blended with the high military quality of knowing when to attempt more than the calculations of a severe prudence will justify, we find the characteristics of the great land or sea captain.

Daylight afforded an opportunity of making a full survey of the miserable plight in which the *Richard* had been left by the battle. A survey was held, and it was soon decided that any attempt to carry the ship in was hopeless. It may be questioned if she could have been kept from sinking in smooth water, so many and serious were the shot-holes; though, after getting the powder on deck by way of security, and contending against them until ten next morning, the flames were got under. The fire had been working insidiously within the ceiling, or this advantage, immaterial as it proved in the end, could not have been gained.. It was determined, after a consultation, to remove the wounded, and to abandon the ship. Jones came to this decision with the greatest reluctance, for he had a strong and natural desire to carry into port all the evidence of the struggle in which he had been engaged; but his own judgment confirmed the opinions of his officers, and he reluctantly gave the order to commence the necessary duty.

The morning of the 24th, or that of the day which succeeded the battle, was foggy, and no view of the sea

was had until near noon. Then it cleared away, and the eye could command a long range of the English coast, as well as of the waters of the offing. Not a sail of any sort was visible, with the exception of those of the squadron and its prizes. So completely had the *audace* of Jones, to use an expressive French term that has no precise English translation, daunted the enemy, that his whole coast appeared to be temporarily under a blockade.

The two pilot boats were very serviceable in receiving the wounded. After toiling at the pumps all the 24th and the succeeding night, the *Richard* was left in the forenoon of the 25th, the water being then as high as the lower deck. About ten, she settled slowly into the water, the poop and mizen-mast being the last that was ever seen of the old *Duc de Duras*, a ship whose reputation will probably live in naval annals as long as books are written and men continue to read.

Jones now erected jury-masts in the *Serapis*, and endeavored to get into the *Texel*, his port of destination. So helpless was the principal prize, however, that she was blown about until the 6th October, before this object could be effected. With a presentiment of what would have been best, Jones himself strongly desired to go into *Dunkirk*, for which port the wind was fair, where he would have been under French protection; but the *concordat* emboldened his captains to remonstrate, and they proceeded to *Holland*.

The arrival of the *soi-disant* American squadron in a neutral country, accompanied by two British men-of-war, as prizes, gave rise to a great political commotion. The people of the Dutch nation were opposed to the

English, and in favor of America, but the government, or its executive at least, and the aristocracy, as a matter of course, felt differently. We shall not weary the reader with the details of all that occurred. It will be sufficient to say, that it was found necessary to hoist French flags in most of the ships, and to put the prizes even under the protection of the *Grand Monarque*. Jones, for a time, got rid of Landais, who was sent for to Paris, and he transferred himself and his favorite officers to the Alliance. This vessel, the only real American ship in the squadron, continued to keep the stars and stripes flying. At one time matters proceeded so far, however, that ships of the line menaced the frigate with forcing her out to sea, where thirty or forty English cruisers were in waiting for her, if she did not lower the as yet unacknowledged ensign. All this Jones withstood, and he actually braved the authorities of Holland, under these critical circumstances, rather than discredit the flag of the country he legitimately served. A French commission was offered to himself, but he declined receiving it, always affirming that he was the senior American sea-captain in Europe, and he claimed all the honors and rights of his rank. His prizes and prisoners were taken from him, in virtue of the *concordat*, and through orders from Dr. Franklin, but the Alliance was an American ship, and American she should continue as long as she remained under his orders !

At length, after two months of wrangling and mortification, Jones prepared to sail. He had been joined by the celebrated Capt. Conyngham, who went passenger in his ship for France. He left the Texel on the

27th December, and a letter written by himself, just as he discharged the pilot, stated that he was fairly outside, with a fair wind, and his *best American ensign flying*. The last was a triumph indeed, and one of which he was justly proud.

The run of the Alliance from the Texel, *through the British Channel*, while so closely watched, has been much vaunted in certain publications, and Jones himself seemed proud of it. It is probable that its merits were the judgment and boldness with which the passage was planned and executed. Com. Dale, a man totally without exaggeration, spoke of it as a bold experiment, that succeeded perfectly because it was unexpected. The enemy, no doubt, looked for the ship to the northward, never dreaming that she would run the gantlet at the Straits of Dover.

Jones hugged the shoals as he came out, and kept well to windward of all the blockading English vessels. In passing Dover he had to go in sight of the shipping in the Downs. As the wind held to the eastward, this he did at little risk. He was equally successful at the Isle of Wight, a fleet lying at Spithead; and several times he eluded heavy cruisers, by going well to the eastward of them. The Alliance went into Corunna, to avoid a gale. Thence she sailed for France, arriving in the roads of Groix on the 10th of February. This was the only cruise Jones ever made in the Alliance. Capt. Landais had injured the sailing of the ship, by the manner in which he stowed the ballast, and this it was that induced her present commander to go in so early, else might he have made a cruise as brilliant as any that had preceded it. It is matter of great regret

that Jones never could get to sea in a vessel worthy of his qualities as a commander. The *Ranger* was dull and crank; the *Alfred* was no better; the *Providence* was of no force, and the reader has just seen what might be expected from the *Richard*. The *Alliance* *was* an excellent ship of her class, though not very heavy; but, just as accident threw her in Jones' way, he was compelled to carry her into port, where she was taken from him.

The history of Jones' life, after he joined the navy, with the exception of the short intervals he was at sea, is a continued narrative of solicitations for commands, or service, and of as continual disappointments. During the whole war, and he sailed in the first squadron, Jones was actually at sea a little short of a year. The remainder of his seven years of service was employed in struggling for employment, or in preparing the imperfect equipments with which he sailed. Could such a man have passed even half his time on board efficient and fast cruisers, on the high seas, we may form some estimate of what he would have effected, by the exploits he actually achieved. By the capture of the *Serapis*, and the character of his last cruise generally, Jones acquired a great reputation, though it did little for him, in the way of obtaining commands suitable to his rank and services.

Our hero had obtained some little circulation in Parisian society, by his capture of the *Drake*, though there is surprisingly little sympathy with any nautical exploits in general, in the brilliant capital of France. But the exploits of the *Bon Homme Richard* overcame this apathy toward the things of the sea, and

Jones became a lion, at once, in the great centre of European civilization. It would be idle to deny that this flattery and these attentions had an influence on his character. - New habits and tastes were created, habits and tastes totally in opposition to those he had formed in youth ; and these are changes that rarely come late in life altogether free from exaggeration. The correspondence of Jones, which was very active, and in the end became quite voluminous, proves, while his mind, manners and opinions were in several respects improved by this change of situation, that they suffered in others. He appears to have had an early predilection for poetry, and he seems to have now indulged it with some freedom in making indifferent rhymes on various ladies. Some of his biographers have placed his effusions on a level with those of the ordinary *vers de société*, then so much in vogue ; but they seem to forget that these were very indifferent rhymes also. In that gay and profligate society to which he was admitted, it was scarcely possible that a bachelor of Jones' temperament should altogether escape the darts of love. His name has been connected with that of a certain Delia, also with that of a certain Madame T——, and also with that of a lady of the name of Lavendahl. This Madame T—— is said to have been a natural daughter of Louis XV., a circumstance that may, or may not, infer rank in society. The attachment to the last, however, has been thought a mere platonic friendship. Some pains have been taken to show that these were ladies of high rank, but a mere title is not now, nor was it in 1779, any proof of a high social condition in France, unless the rank were as high as that of a *duchesse*.

That Jones was a lion in Paris, is a fact beyond question, but much exaggeration has accompanied the accounts of his reception. His return occurred in the midst of an exciting war, and it is scarcely possible that his exploits should be overlooked by the government, or the *beau monde*, but they were far from occupying either, in the manner that has been mentioned by certain of his panegyrists.

After a visit to Paris, he returned to the coast, where new difficulties arose with Landais. By a decision of one of the commissioners, that officer was restored to the command of the Alliance, and the quarrel was renewed. But the brevity of this sketch will not permit us to give an account of all the discussions in which Jones was engaged, either with his superiors or with his subordinates. It is difficult to believe that there was not some fault in the temperament of the man, although it must be admitted that he served under great disadvantages, and never had justice done to his talents or his deeds in the commands he received. The end of this new source of contempt was Landais putting Jones' own officers, Dale and others, ashore, and sailing for America, where he was laid on the shelf himself, and his ship was given to Barry.

The immediate nautical service on hand was to get several hundred tons of military stores to America. With this duty Jones had been intrusted, and he now begged hard that his prize, the *Serapis*, might be borrowed for that purpose. He doubtless wished to show the ship in this country, as his plan was to arm her *en flute* merely, and to give her convoy by a twenty-gun ship, called the *Ariel*, which the French government

had consented to lend the Americans. On reaching America, he hoped to get up a new expedition, with the *Serapis* for his own pennant.

This arrangement could not be made, however, and Jones was compelled to receive smaller favors. As a little consolation, and one to which he was far from being indifferent, the King of France sent him, about this time, (June, 1780,) the cross of military merit, which he was to carry to the French minister in America, who had instructions to confer it on him on some suitable occasion. At the same time, he was informed that Louis XVI. had directed a handsome sword to be made, with suitable inscriptions, which should be forwarded to him as soon as possible. This was grateful intelligence to a man so sensitive on the subject of the opinions of others, and doubtless was received as some atonement for his many disappointments.

By the beginning of September, Jones was ready to sail for America, in the *Ariel*. He had got together as many of his old *Richard's* as possible for a crew, and had crammed the vessel in every practicable place with stores. He lay a month in the roads of Groix, however, with a foul wind. On the 8th October, he went to sea, but met a gale that very night, in which his ship was nearly lost. He was obliged to anchor at no great distance to windward of the Penmarks, where the *Ariel* rolled her lower yard-arms into the water. She could not be kept head to sea with the anchors down, but fell off with a constant drift. Cutting away the fore-mast relieved her, but now she pitched the heel of the main-mast out of the step, and it became necessary to cut away that spar, to save the ship. This brought down



the mizen-mast, as a matter of course, when the vessel became easier. For two days and near three nights did the Ariel continue in her crazy berth, anchored in the open ocean, with one of the most dangerous ledges of rocks known, a short distance under her lee, when she was relieved by a shift of wind. Jury-masts were erected, and the vessel got back to the roads from which she had sailed.

In speaking of this gale, in a letter to one of his female friends, Jones quaintly remarks, "I know not why Neptune was in such anger, unless he thought it *an affront in me to appear on his ocean with so insignificant a force.*" It is in this same letter that he makes the manly and high-toned remark, apropos of some imputed dislike of a certain English lady, "The English nation may *hate* me, but *I will force them to esteem me too.*"

In the gale Jones was supported by his officers. Dale and Henry Lunt were with him, as indeed were most of the officers of the Richard who survived the action, and the risks of this gale were thought to equal those of their bloody encounter with the Serapis. Dale spoke of this time as one of the most, if not the most, serious he had met with in the course of his service, and extolled the coolness and seamanship of Jones as being of the highest order. The latter, indeed, was a quick, ready seaman, never hesitating with doubts or ignorance.

It is worthy of being mentioned, that while lying at Groix, repairing damages, a difficulty occurred between Jones and Truxtun, about the right of the latter to wear a pennant in his ship; he being then in command of a

private armed vessel. It appears Truxtun hoisted a *broad* pennant, and this at a time when he had no right to wear a narrow one, Congress having passed a law denying this privilege to private vessels. These fiery spirits were just suited to meet in such a conflict, and it is only surprising Jones did not send a force to lower Truxtun's emblem for him. His desire to prevent scandalous scenes in a French port alone prevented it.

Jones did not get out again until the 18th December, when he made the best of his way to America. The *Ariel* appears to have made the southern passage. In lat. 26, N. and long. 59, she made an English frigate-built ship, that had greatly the superiority over her in sailing. Jones, according to his own account of the matter, rather wished to avoid this vessel, his own ship being deep and much burdened, his crew a good deal disaffected, and the stranger seeming the heaviest. After passing a night in a vain attempt to elude him, he was found so near the next day as to render an action inevitable, should the stranger, now believed to be an enemy, see fit to seek it. Under the circumstances, therefore, Jones thought it prudent to clear ship. The stranger chased, the *Ariel* keeping him astern, in a way to prevent him from closing until after nightfall. As the day declined, the *Ariel* occasionally fired a light gun at the ship astern, crowding sail, as if anxious to escape. By this time, however, Jones was satisfied he should have to contend with a vessel not much, if any, heavier than his own, and he shortened sail, to allow the stranger to close. Both ships set English colors, and as they drew near, the *Ariel* hauled up, compelling the stranger to pass under her lee, both vessels at quar-

ters, with the batteries lighted up. In this situation, each evidently afraid of the other, a conversation commenced that lasted an hour. Jones asked for news from America, which the stranger freely communicated. He said his ship was American built, and had been lately captured from the Americans and put into the English service. Her name was stated to be the *Triumph*, and that of her commander Pindar. Jones now ordered this Mr. Pindar to lower a boat and come on board. A refusal brought on an action, which lasted a few minutes, when the stranger struck. The fire of the *Ariel* was very animated, that of the *soi-disant* *Triumph* very feeble. The latter called out for quarter, saying half his people were killed. The *Ariel* ceased firing, and as she had passed to leeward before she commenced firing, the stranger drew ahead and tacked, passing to windward in spite of the chasing fire of her enemy.

Jones was greatly indignant at this escape. He always considered, or affected to consider, the *Triumph* a king's ship of equal force, though she was probably nothing more than a light armed and weakly manned *Letter-of-Marque*. By some it has even been imagined the *Triumph* was an American, who supposed he was actually engaged with an English vessel of war. Different writers have spoken of this rencontre as a handsome victory; but Com. Dale, a man whose nature seemed invulnerable to the attempts of any exaggerated feeling, believed the *Ariel's* foe was an English *Letter-of-Marque*, and attributed her escape to the cleverness of her manœuvres. That her commander violated the laws of war, and those of morality, is beyond a question.

Shortly after this affair, Jones discovered a plot among the English of his crew to seize the ship, and twenty of the most dangerous of the mutineers were confined. It was not found necessary, however, to execute any of them at sea, and the ship reached Philadelphia, on February 18th, 1781, making Jones' absence from the country a little exceeding three years and three months.

Notwithstanding certain unpleasant embarrassments awaited Jones, on his return to America, after the brilliant scenes in which he had been an actor, he had no reason to complain of his reception. Landais had actually been dismissed as insane, and this, too, principally on the testimony of Mr. Lee, the commissioner who had reinstated him in the command of the Alliance; a circumstance that, of itself, settled several of the unpleasant points that had been in dispute. But the delay in shipping the stores had produced much inconvenience to the army, and Congress appointed a committee formally to inquire into the cause. The result was favorable to Jones, and the committee reported resolutions, that were adopted, expressive of the sense Congress entertained of Jones' service, and of the gratification it afforded that body to know the King of France intended to confer on him the order of military merit. In consequence of this resolution, the French minister gave a fête, and, in presence of all the principal persons of the place, conferred on Jones the cross of the order. In the course of the examinations that were made by Congress, forty-seven interrogatories were put to Jones, and it is worthy of remark, that his answers were of a nature to do credit to both his principles and his head.

This affair disposed of, nothing but the grateful respect which followed success, awaited our hero, who justly filled a high place in the public estimation. The thanks of Congress were solemnly voted to him, as his due.

A question now seriously arose in Congress, on the subject of making Jones a rear-admiral. He had earnestly remonstrated about the rank given him when the regulated list of captains was made out, and there was an *éclat* about his renown, that gave a weight to his representations. Remonstrances from the older captains, however, prevented any resolution from passing on this question, and Jones was finally rewarded by a unanimous election, *by ballot*, in Congress, appointing him to the command of the *America* 74, a ship then on the stocks. As this was much the most considerable trust of the sort within the gift of the government, it speaks in clear language the estimation in which he was held.

The *America* was far from being ready to launch, however. Still Jones was greatly gratified with the compliment. He even inferred that it placed him highest in rank in the navy, the law regulating comparative rank with the army, saying that a captain of a ship of more than forty guns should rank with a colonel, while those of forty guns ranked only with lieutenants-colonel; and the *America* being the only ship that carried or rated more than forty guns, he jumped to the conclusion that he out-ranked the eight or ten captains above him, whose commissions had higher numbers than his own. It is probable this reasoning would have given way before inquiry. A cap-

tain in command of a squadron, now, ranks temporarily with a brigadier-general. The youngest captain on the list may hold this trust, yet, when he lowers his pennant, or even when he meets his senior in service, though in command of a single ship, the date or number of the commission determines the relative rank of the parties.

It is worthy of remark that Jones, before he quitted Philadelphia, exhibited his personal accounts, by which it appeared that he had not yet received one dollar of pay, and this for nearly five years' service ; proof of itself that he was not without private funds, and did not enter the navy a mere adventurer. On the contrary, he is said to have advanced considerable sums to government, and in the end to have been a loser by his advances. But who was not, that had money to lose, and who sustained the cause that triumphed in that arduous struggle ?

It would be useless here to follow Jones, step by step, in connection with his new command. He joined the ship in the strong hope of having her at sea in a few months ; but this far exceeded the means of the country. As he travelled toward Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, where the *America* was on the stocks, he wore his cross of the order of Military Merit, which did well enough at head quarters, when he paid a visit to Washington. There, however, it was hinted to him he had better lay it aside on entering the New England states, a portion of the country in which personal distinctions were, and are peculiarly offensive to the people. One cannot object to this particular instance of the feeling, for the citizen of a nation that rejects such rewards in its own

political system, ought to have too much self-respect to accept them from a foreign state ; but an affectation of humility, rather than its reality, forms a part of the social faith of this section of the republic. Thus it is that we see the manly practice of self-nomination frowned on, while nowhere else are lower arts practiced to obtain nominations by others than among these fastidious observers of a proud political modesty. Exaggerations, whether in religion, morals, manners, speech, or appearance, always result in this ; the simplicity of truth being as far removed from the acting they induce, as virtue is remote from vice. Nothing in nature can be violated with impunity, her laws never failing to vindicate their ascendancy in some shape or other.

Jones reached Portsmouth, at the close of August, 1781. The duty of superintending a vessel on the stocks, in the height of a war, was particularly irksome to a man of his temperament, and Portsmouth was a place very different from Paris. He was more than a year thus engaged, during most of which time he did not quit his post. In the course of the summer of 1782, however, the French lost a ship called the *Magnifique*, in the harbor of Boston, and Congress determined to present the *America* to the King of France, as a substitute. This deprived Jones of his command, just as he was about to realize something from all his labors. Fortune had ordered that he was never to get a good ship under the American flag, and that all his exploits were to derive their lustre more from his own military qualities than from the means employed.

November 5th, 1781, the *America* was launched ; the same day Jones transferred her to the French of-

ficer who was directed to receive her. At the time he did this, he believed he was to be employed on a second expedition. He expected, indeed, to get his old flame, the *Indien*, which was called the South Carolina, and was lying at Philadelphia. Her arrangement with South Carolina was nearly up, and Congress had claims, by means of which it was hoped she might yet be transferred to her original owners. Matters went so far that Com. Gillan, who commanded the ship, was arrested; but the vessel got to sea under Capt. Joyner, and was captured by three English frigates, a few hours out; not without suspicions of collusion with the enemy.

There were now no means of employing Jones afloat, and he got permission to make a cruise in the French fleet, for the purpose of acquiring some knowledge of a fleet. He sailed in the *Triomphante*, the flag-ship of M. de Vaudreuil. M. de Viomenil, with a large military suite, was on board, and sixty officers dined together every day. It is characteristic of Jones, that he should mention that the French general was put into the *larboard* state-room, while he himself occupied the *starboard*! This might have been done on account of his being a stranger, and strictly a guest; or it might have been done because M. de Viomenil knew nothing of naval etiquette on such points, while Jones attached great importance to it.

This cruise doubtless furnished many new ideas to a man like Jones, but its military incidents were not worthy of being recorded. Peace was made in April, 1783, and Jones left the fleet at Cape François, reaching Philadelphia, May 18th. His health was not good,



and he passed the summer at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for the benefit of a cold bath. He now had a project of retiring to a farm, but, it is probable, the quiet, dull condition of the country, under the reaction of peace, did not suit him, for he applied to Congress for a commission as agent to look after the prizes made on his great cruise, particularly those which had been given up to the English by the Danes. Armed with such authority, he sailed for France, November 10th, in the Washington, late General Monk, the ship Barney had so gallantly taken in the Hyder Ally, and which he then commanded. This vessel was the last relic of the navy of the Revolution, being the only vessel then owned by the government, or at least employed. Jones landed at Dover, from which place he proceeded to London, and thence to Paris, making the whole journey in five days; tolerable proof he did not relish the country. Had he been known, it is by no means probable that he would have escaped without insult, for no man had ever alarmed the English coast so thoroughly in these later times. Nevertheless, he is said to have appeared on 'Change, while in London, and to have been recognised. He also went to one of the theatres, though a face must be much known to make that a very hazardous thing.

Jones was two years engaged in settling his prize questions in France. This was done after a great deal of vexation, and his active mind then turned to a voyage of commercial enterprise, that included the North-west Coast, Japan, the Sandwich Islands, and the ends of the earth, in its plans. The celebrated Ledyard was to be his supercargo, and Jones commander-in-chief. Disco-

very, science, and honor, were to be united with profit, and the whole was to have a character of high motives. Like so many others of our hero's projects, this also failed for want of means.

In 1787, Jones determined to go to Denmark, to push his demands on that government in person. He had actually got as far as Brussels, when he was unexpectedly called to America, in consequence of some new difficulty connected with his compensation. The new constitution was not yet framed, and the affairs of the confederation presented embarrassments at every turn to all the public servants. This visit to America was made in the spring, and Jones remained in this country until autumn. October 18, 1787, Congress voted him a gold medal, in honor of his services while at the head of the squadron of the *concordat*. A letter to the King of France, in his favor, was also written by that body; one of the highest honors it ever paid a citizen. It is singular that Jones, on his return to Europe, manifested an apprehension of being seized by some of the English ships, though a general peace prevailed, and it is not easy to see under what pretence such an outrage could have been committed. It would have been just as legal to arrest Washington, had *he* been found on the high seas. There was certainly no love between the parties, and England, in that day, did many lawless things; but it may be questioned if she would have presumed to go as far as this. Jones did not quit America, until November 11th, 1787, which was the last day he ever had his foot on the western continent.

In January, 1788, Jones received some new credentials for Denmark, and shortly after he proceeded to

Copenhagen. He is known to have been in that capital early in March. Previously to quitting Paris, some proposals had been made to Jones to enter into the service of Russia, which were now renewed, through Baron Kreudener, Catherine's minister in Denmark. In April, our hero, in consequence of the negotiations which had commenced on this subject, determined to go to St. Petersburg. As regards his application to the Danish Court, it resulted in fair promises. The demand amounted to £50,000 sterling, and Jones was put off with fine speeches and personal compliments, and had a patent sent after him, entitling him to a pension of 1500 Danish crowns, in consideration of "the respect he had shown to the Danish flag, while he had commanded in the North Seas." It seems to us impossible to understand this as any other than a direct bribe, ingeniously covered up, to induce Jones not to press his demands. The agent who is sent to recover claims, in which others are interested, cannot accept compensation for himself, unless it include the interests of all the parties concerned. Jones himself did not, at first, seem to know in what light he was to view this pension, and for several years he did not ask for the money. The arrears were inventoried in his will, though it appears nothing was ever paid on them. Nothing was ever received, either, for the prizes. It must be confessed, Denmark paid her debts at a cheap rate.

Jones had been well received at all the courts where he presented himself. Immediately on his arrival at St. Petersburg, Catherine made him a rear-admiral. His passage across the Gulf of Finland had been perilous and romantic, and threw an *éclat* around his ap-

proach, that was not unsuited to his established character. He reached St. Petersburg, April 23d, (old style,) and he left it to join Prince Potemkin, in the Black Sea, on the 7th May, with his new commission in his pocket. His reception by Potemkin was flattering, but our admiral did not conceal from himself that his brother flag-officers felt any thing but joy at seeing him. The cabals against him commenced the first hour of his arrival, nor do they appear to have ceased until the day of his departure. The motley force assembled under the Imperial flag, included officers of many different nations, some of whom much affected superiority over one whom the English, in particular, took every occasion to malign.

The history of Jones' service under the Russian flag is a revolting account of intrigues, bad management, and disappointment. The operations were far from trifling in their extent, and there were several engagements, in all of which the Turks suffered, but nothing was effected of the brilliant and decisive character that marked the proper exploits of Paul Jones. Such a man ought not to have served under a chief like Potemkin, for nothing is more certain than that, in any glory, the favorite would seize the lion's share. Still Jones distinguished himself on more than one occasion, though our limits will not admit of entering into details. In one or two actions he was much exposed, and manifested high personal resolution; perhaps as much so as on any other occasions of his life.

It has been seen that Jones left St. Petersburg, May, 1788; in December he had returned, virtually in disgrace. This event has often been ascribed to the

enmity of the English officers in the Russian marine ; never to any official act of Jones himself. It was, in truth, owing to the personal displeasure of Potemkin, one with whom a man of our rear-admiral's disposition would not be likely long to agree. Catherine received Jones favorably, as to appearances at least, and, for a short time, he had hopes of being again employed.

But the enemies of Jones had determined to get rid of him, and it is believed they resorted to an infamous expedient to effect his ruin in the estimation of the empress. A girl who entered his apartment, to sell some light articles, charged him with an attempt to violate her person. Inquiry subsequently gave reason to believe the whole thing a trick, and Jones always protested his entire innocence ; but sufficient clamor was made to render his further sojourn in Russia, for the moment at least, unpleasant. Catherine was evidently satisfied that injustice had been done him, but she did not care to offend Potemkin. Jones was permitted to travel, retaining his rank and appointments. His furlough, which Jones himself, oddly enough, more than once calls his "parole," extended to two years, but was doubtless meant to be unlimited in its effect. Catherine had previously conferred on him the ribbon of St. Anne.

Jones left St. Petersburg, in July, 1789, after a residence of about fifteen months in Russia. He traveled south, by Warsaw, where he remained some time, after which he visited Holland. About this time his constitution began sensibly to give way. It is probable that the disappointments he had met with in the north preyed upon his feelings, his enemies being as active as ever

in circulating stories to his disadvantage. His finances were impaired, too, and he appears to think that his pecuniary compensation from Russia had been light. Now it was that he would gladly have received the arrears of his pension from Denmark, a pension that certainly he ought never to have seemed to accept. In his justification, however, he says that both Jefferson and Morris advised him to profit by the liberality of the Danish Court ; but, in all cases, a man should decide for himself in a matter touching his own honor. Others frequently give advice, that they would reject in their own acts.

In 1790, Jones was at Paris, well received by his friends ; but no longer a lion, or a subject of public attention. He manifested strong interest in his Scottish relations this season, and speaks of the education of his nephews and nieces. But it is to the credit of Jones, that, throughout his whole career, and while most flattered with the attentions of the great, he never forgot to be affectionate and kind to his sisters. It was a blank year to him, however, his time being mostly occupied in endeavoring so to settle his affairs as to procure funds. In March, 1791, he addressed the empress, stating that his "parole" had nearly expired, and desiring to be ordered to return. All his letters and communications show that his spirit was a good deal broken, and the elasticity of his mind partially gone. He still thought of and reasoned about ships, but it was no longer with the fire and earnestness of his youth. The events in progress at Paris may have had some influence on him, though nowhere does he speak of

them in his letters. His silence, in this respect, is even remarkable.

The new American Constitution went into operation in 1789; and Jones rightly enough predicted that this event would produce a regular and permanent marine. His hopes, however, outstripped the facts; the results which he hoped would affect himself, and that soon, occurring several years later. He expected, and with reason, so far as his claims were concerned, to be commissioned an admiral in the new marine; but he did not live to see the marine itself established. One ray of satisfaction, however, gleamed on his last days, the government of Washington giving him reason to expect a diplomatic appointment, to arrange certain difficulties with some of the Barbary powers. The appointment came shortly after Jones was laid in his grave; proving beyond a question that he possessed the confidence of some of the wisest and best men of America, as long as he lived.

Jones' health had been impaired for some years. The form which his disease assumed—jaundice—renders it probable that the state of his mind affected his health. Dropsy supervened, and in July, 1792, he was thought so ill, as to send for Mr. Morris, and other friends, in order to make his will. For two days he was so much swollen as not to be able to button his vest; this it was that induced him to make his will. It was signed about eight o'clock, in the evening of the 18th, and he was then left, seated in his chair, by the friends who had witnessed it. Shortly after, he walked into his bed-room, by himself. It was not long before his physician came to see him. The bed-room was entered,

and Jones was found lying on his face, on the bed, with his feet on the floor, quite dead.

The death of Jones was honorably noticed in France. The National Assembly sent a deputation of twelve of its members to attend the funeral, and other honors were shown his remains. He was interred in a cemetery that no longer exists, but which then was used, near la Barriere du Combat, for the interment of Protestants. It is probable that no traces of his grave could now be found.

The estate left by Jones was respectable, though far from large. Still he could not be said to have died in poverty; though so much of his estate was in claims, that he often wanted money. Among other assets mentioned in his will were \$9000 of stock in the Bank of North America, with sundry unclaimed dividends. On the supposition that two years of dividends were due, this item alone must have amounted, with the premium, to something like £2000 sterling. He bequeathed all he owned to his two sisters, and their children.\*

There can be no question that Paul Jones was a great man. By this we mean far more than an enterprising

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\* Those who take an interest in such details, may be pleased to know that the heirs of Paul Jones realized about \$40,000 from his estate, though much of it was lost. Among other assets, was the sword presented to him by Louis XVI. This sword is said to have cost 500 louis d'or, near \$2400. As there has been some controversy respecting it, growing out of a hasty and ill-considered statement of Capt. Mackenzie's, we will give the history of the transaction, as it has been communicated to us by Miss Janette Taylor, Jones' niece, in part, and in part ascertained from other sources.

Jones made no bequest of the sword, which became the property of his ten heirs. It was sent to Scotland, where it was a bone of contention, and was the cause of an unpleasant legal proceeding



and dashing seaman. The success which attended exploits effected by very insufficient means, forms the least portion of his claims to the character. His mind aimed at high objects, and kept an even pace with his elevated views. We have only to fancy such a man at the head of a force like that with which Nelson achieved the victory of the Nile—twelve as perfect and well commanded two-decked ships as probably ever sailed in company—in order to get some idea of what he would have done with them, having a peerage or Westminster Abbey in the perspective. No sea captain, of whom the world possesses any well authenticated account, ever attempted projects as bold as those of Jones, or which discovered more of the distinctive qualities of a great mind, if the character of his enemy be kept in view, as well as his own limited and imperfect means. The battle between the *Serapis* and the *Richard* had some

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between Mrs. Taylor and a brother-in-law. At last it was determined to present the sword to Robert Morris, as a testimonial of his services to its original owner. How it passed from Mr. Morris to Com. Barry is a disputed point. Capt. Mackenzie has said it was presented to the navy, to be worn by its senior officer; but this cannot have been true, without making Barry unfaithful to his trust, and without any visible reason, as he undoubtedly bequeathed it to Dale, in his will; Dale, who never was the senior officer of the navy, and who was not in the navy at all when the bequest was made. Mr. Morris, in the letter acknowledging the gift, remarks, that, being a civilian, he had given the sword, not to the navy, but to a naval officer. Nothing is said of any conditions. Barry bequeathed it to Dale, as the man of all others—Jones' family excepted—who had the best right to it, and it is now the property of his son, Capt. Montgomery Dale, of the navy. It is not our intention to express any opinion on the subject of the person who has now the best moral right to use this sword, though we think the legal right of Capt. Dale is indisputable.

extraordinary peculiarities, beyond a question, and yet, as a victory, it has been often surpassed. The peculiarities belong strictly to Jones; but we think his offering battle to the Drake, alone in his sloop, in the centre of the Irish Channel, with enemies before, behind, and on each side of him, an act of higher moral courage than the attack on the Serapis. Landais' extraordinary conduct could not have been foreseen, and it was only when Jones found himself reduced to an emergency in this last affair, that he came out in his character of indomitable resolution. But all the cruises of the man indicated forethought, intrepidity, and resources. Certainly, no sea captain under the American flag, Preble excepted, has ever yet equaled him, in these particulars.

That Jones had many defects of character is certain. They arose in part from temperament, and in part from education. His constant declarations of the delicacy of his sentiments, and of the disinterestedness of his services, though true in the main, were in a taste that higher associations in youth would probably have corrected. There was, however, a loftiness of feeling about him, that disinclined him equally to meanness and vulgarity; and as for the coarseness of language and deportment that too much characterized the habits of the sea, in his time, he appears never to have yielded to them. All this was well in itself, and did him credit; but it would have been better had he spoken less frequently of his exemption from such failings, and not have alluded to them so often in his remarks on others.

There was something in the personal character of Jones that weakened his hold on his contemporaries, though it does not appear to have ever produced a want

of confidence in his services or probity. Com. Dale used to mention him with respect, and even with attachment; often calling him Paul, with a degree of affection that spoke well for both parties. Still, it is not to be concealed that a species of indefinite distrust clouded his reputation even in America, until the industry of his biographers, by means of indisputable documents and his own voluminous correspondence, succeeded in placing him before the public in a light too unequivocally respectable to leave any reasonable doubts that public sentiment had silently done him injustice. The power of England, in the way of opinion, has always been great in this country, and it is probable the discredit that nation threw on the reputation of Jones, produced an influence, more visible in its results than in its workings, on his standing even with those he had so well served.

Notwithstanding the many proofs furnished by himself, of a weakness on the subject of personal consideration, Jones gave some proofs of a high feeling of self-respect. His cards bore the simple, but proud name of "Paul Jones," without any titles or official rank. His associations, too, were unquestionably high, at one period of his life. Even Englishmen of rank and reputation drew accurate distinctions between his real character and career, and those which were so assiduously imputed to him by Grub Street writers. The Duke of Dorset, the English ambassador at Paris, freely received him, and he is said to have lived on terms of intimacy with Lord Wemys, Admiral Digby, and others of like condition.

In person, Jones was of the middle stature, with a

complexion that was colorless, and with a skin that showed the exposure of the seas. He was well formed and active. His contemporaries have described him as quiet and unassuming in his manners, and of rather retiring deportment. The enthusiasm which ran in so deep a current in his heart, was not of the obtrusive sort ; nor was it apt to appear until circumstances arose to call it into action ; then, it seemed to absorb all the other properties of his being. Glory, he constantly avowed, was his aim, and there is reason to think he did not mistake his own motives in this particular. It is perhaps to be regretted that his love of glory was so closely connected with his personal vanity ; but even this is better than the glory which is sought as an instrument of ruthless power.

If an author may be permitted to quote from himself, we shall conclude this sketch by adding what we have already said, by way of summary, of this remarkable man, in a note to the first edition of the History of the United States Navy, viz. : " In battle, Paul Jones was brave ; in enterprise, hardy and original ; in victory, mild and generous ; in motives, much disposed to disinterestedness, though ambitious of renown and covetous of distinction ; in his pecuniary relations, liberal ; in his affections, natural and sincere ; and in his temper, except in those cases which assailed his reputation, just and forgiving." That these good qualities were without alloy, it would be presumptuous to assert ; but it appears certain that his defects were relieved by high proofs of greatness, and that his deeds were no more than the proper results of the impulses, talents, and native instincts of the man.

## MELANCTHON TAYLOR WOOLSEY.

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THE subject of this sketch was a native of New York, in which state his family has long been resident. His father was Melancthon L. Woolsey, an officer of the Revolution, and subsequently known as General Woolsey, and collector of Plattsburg. His mother was a lady of the well-known family of Livingston, and a daughter of a divine of some eminence. The Woolseys were from Long Island, where they were very respectably connected; while, by his mother, young Woolsey, in addition to his Livingston descent, certainly one of the most distinguished of America, was connected with the Platts, Breeses, and other families of respectability, in the interior of his native state. The present Capt. Breese and the subject of this notice were cousins once-removed.

Young Woolsey was born about the year 1782, his parents having married near the termination of the war of the Revolution. His early education was that usually given to young gentlemen intended for the professions, and the commencement of the year 1800 found him a student in the office of the late Mr. Justice Platt, then a lawyer of note, residing at Whitesborough, in Oneida County, and the member of Congress for his district. This was the period when the present navy may be

said to have been formed, the armaments of 1798 and 1799 having substantially brought it into existence. Young Woolsey, being of an athletic frame and manly habits, had early expressed a desire to enter the service, a wish that was gratified through the influence of Mr. Platt, as soon as that gentleman attended in his seat in Congress, which then sat in Philadelphia. We ought to have mentioned that Mr. Justice Platt was the husband of a sister of his pupil's mother, and consequently was the latter's uncle by marriage.

As the warrant of Mr. Woolsey was dated in 1800, he was about eighteen years of age when he first entered the service. He was ordered to the *Adams* 28, Capt. Valentine Morris, which vessel was bound to the West India station. The *Adams*, which was familiarly known to the service by the name of the "Little *Adams*," to distinguish her from the *John Adams*, was a vessel of great sailing qualities, and was one of the favorite ships of the navy. She was so sharp, and yet so slightly built, that it has been said it was not easy to write in her cabin, on account of the tremor, when she was going fast through the water. The *Adams* met with some success on this cruise, capturing no less than five French privateers, though neither was of a force to make any resistance. These vessels were named *l'Heureuse Rencontre*, *le Gambeau*, *la Renommée*, the *Dove*, and *le Massena*. This was active service, and proved a good school for all the young men who served in the ship. Young Woolsey was conspicuous for attention to his duty, and was a general favorite. When the cruise was up, the ship returned to New York.

Woolsey learned a great deal of the elementary por-

tions of his profession during the few months he served in the Adams. He was of an age to see the necessity for exertion, as well as to comprehend the reasons of what he saw done, and few midshipmen made better use of their time.

Young Woolsey was transferred to the Boston 28, Capt. McNiell, as soon as the Adams was paid off. This was the ship, commander, and cruise, that have since given rise to so many rumors and anecdotes in the service. Although the proper place to record the more material incidents of this singular cruise, as well as the striking personal peculiarities of Capt. McNiell himself, will be in the biography of that officer, one or two that were connected with the subject of this sketch may be related here.

In dropping out of the East River into the Hudson, the pilot got the Boston on a reef of rocks that lie near the Battery. Woolsey, who had made himself a good deal of a seaman while in the Adams, was rated as a master's mate on board the Boston, and he was sent ashore with a boat, with orders to go to the navy-agent, in order to direct him to send off a lighter, with spare anchors and cables. On landing, he met the navy-agent on the battery, and communicated his orders. The latter asked Mr. Woolsey to proceed with his boat a short distance, in order to tow a lighter round to a point where it could receive the ground-tackle needed. Supposing he should be conforming to the wishes of his captain, and knowing that, in consequence of meeting the navy-agent on the Battery, he might still return to the ship sooner than he was expected, the young officer complied. As soon as the duty was over, Woolsey

returned on board the *Boston*, repaired to the cabin, and reported all that he had done. His captain heard him with grave attention. When the midshipman had got through with his story, and expected to be applauded for his judicious decision, the reasons for which he had paraded with some little effort, Capt. McNiell looked intently at him, and uttered, in a slow, distinct manner, the words, "D—d yahoo!" Woolsey remonstrated, with some warmth, but the only atonement he received was a repetition of "D—d yahoo!" uttered in a more quick and snappish manner.

This little affair was very near driving our young officer out of the ship; but his good sense got the better of his pride, and he came to the wise decision not to let his public career be affected by his private feelings. Ships were then difficult to be found; the cruise promised to be both instructing and agreeable, in other respects; and large allowances were always made for Capt. McNiell's humor. We say the wise decision, since an officer is usually wrong who suffers a misunderstanding with a superior to drive him from his vessel. So long as he is right and does his duty, he can always maintain his position with dignity and self-respect.

The *Boston* was the ship that carried Chancellor Livingston and suite to France, when the former went as a minister to negotiate the treaty for the cession of Louisiana. The passage was pleasant enough, until the ship got near her port, when she was caught in a fearful gale, that blew directly on shore, and came very near being lost. Every one admitted that the frigate was saved by the steadiness and seamanship of the old



officer who commanded her. He carried sail in a way that astounded all on board, but succeeded in clawing off the land. We have heard Woolsey say that he carried on the ship so hard that the muzzles of the quarter-deck guns were frequently under water. In a word, the struggle seemed to be between the power of the elements and the resolution and perseverance of a single man, and the last prevailed.

After landing the minister, the Boston, in pursuance of her instructions, proceeded to the Mediterranean, where she was to join the squadron under the orders of Com. Dale. But it did not suit the caprices of Capt. McNiell to come within the control of a superior, and he managed in a way to avoid both of the officers who commanded while the ship was out. He gave convoy, and for a short time was off Tripoli, blockading, but the Constellation appearing before that port, he immediately left it, and did not return. Woolsey used to relate a hundred laughable anecdotes concerning this cruise, during which Capt. McNiell committed some acts that hardly could be excused by the oddity of his character. While the ship was on the African coast, the captain sent for the pilot, a Frenchman, in order to ascertain the position of a particular reef, or a shoal, about which he had some misgivings. Woolsey entered the cabin on duty just as this consultation was held. The Frenchman was pointing to the chart, and he said, a little at a loss to indicate the precise spot, "*Là-là, Monsieur.*" "*Là-là-là, b—r là, where's the reef?*" demanded McNiell.

On another occasion, while the ship lay at Malaga, Woolsey was sent on shore, at nine, for the captain,

who had dined that day with the consul. Sweden was at war with Tripoli, at that time, as well as ourselves, and a Swedish squadron was then at Malaga, the admiral and captains also dining with the consul on this occasion. McNiell was seated between the admiral and one of his captains, when Woolsey was shown into the dining-room. The young man reported the boat. "What do you say?" called out Capt. McNiell. Woolsey repeated what he had said. McNiell now leaned forward, and, his face within two feet of that of the admiral, he called out, "These bloody Swedes keep such a chattering, you must speak louder."

But these were trifles in the history of this extraordinary man, and we only relate them on account of their connection with the subject of this sketch. After remaining abroad near or quite a twelve-month, the *Boston* returned home, where her commander was discharged from the service, and the ship was laid up in ordinary, never to be re-commissioned. She was subsequently burned at the taking of Washington.

We do not happen to possess the proofs to say whether Woolsey returned to America in the *Boston*, or whether he joined one of the ships of Com. Morris' squadron, at Gibraltar. We cannot find any evidence that Capt. McNiell ever joined either commodore, and it is not easy to see how one of his midshipmen could have got into another ship without such a junction. At any rate, Woolsey was certainly in the Chesapeake, as one of her midshipmen, while Com. Morris had his pennant flying in her, and he went with that officer to the New York, acting Capt. Chauncey. On the passage between Gibraltar and Malta, the *Enterprise* in

company, occurred the explosion on board the New York, by means of which that frigate came very near being lost. Woolsey always spoke in the highest terms of the coolness and decision of Chauncey, on this trying occasion, by which alone the vessel was saved. As it was, nineteen officers and men were blown up, or were seriously burned, fourteen of whom lost their lives. The sentinel in the magazine passage was driven quite through to the filling-room door, and only a single thickness of plank lay between the fire and the powder of the magazine, when the flames were extinguished.

Woolsey went off Tripoli again, in the New York, and was present when Porter made his spirited attack on the wheat-boats ashore, and in the abortive attempt that was subsequently made at cannonading the town. We are not certain whether Mr. Woolsey returned home in the Adams, with Com. Morris, or whether he continued out on the station until the New York's cruise was up. There could not have been much difference in the time, however, our young officer serving afloat in the Adams, Boston, Chesapeake, New York, and, we believe, in the Adams, again, with little or no interruption, from the time he entered the service, in 1800, to the close of the year 1803. During these cruises, Woolsey made himself a sailor, and a good one he was for the time he had been at sea, and the opportunities he had enjoyed.

In consequence of having been attached to the previous squadron, or that of Com. Morris, Woolsey had not the good fortune to belong to that of Preble, which so much distinguished itself in the succeeding year. His next service was in the Essex 32, Capt. James

Barron, a ship that was then justly deemed one of the best ordered in the navy. The Essex formed one of the vessels that were placed under the orders of Com. Samuel Barron, and she arrived out shortly after the explosion of the Intrepid ketch. When Com. Rodgers assumed the command of the force in the Mediterranean, the Essex was one of his squadron, which consisted of no less than twenty-four sail, gunboats included. Thirteen of these vessels appeared in company before the town of Tunis, dictating the terms of a treaty of indemnity to that regency. The Essex was of the number.

In the course of the exchanges that were made, Capt. Campbell took command of the Essex. About this time Woolsey received an acting appointment as a lieutenant, and when Capt. Campbell again exchanged with Com. Rodgers, the latter coming home, and the former remaining out in command, Woolsey went, with a large proportion of the officers of the Essex, to the Constitution 44.

In the Constitution, then the commanding ship, Woolsey remained on the Mediterranean station, until near the close of the year 1807. He had, for his mess-mates, Charles Ludlow, William Burrows, and various other young men of merit. None of the lieutenants, Ludlow excepted, were commissioned, but they were all held in abeyance, with orders to Com. Campbell to report on their qualifications and conduct. That officer was so well satisfied with his young men, however, that in the end each of them got his proper place on the list. In that day, lieutenants were frequently very young men, and it sometimes happened that their frolics partook more of the levity of youth than is now

apt to occur, in officers of that rank. One little incident, which occurred to Woolsey while he was under the command of Com. Campbell, tells so well for the parties concerned, that we cannot refrain from relating it; more especially as the officer whose conduct appeared to the most advantage in the affair is still living, and it may serve to make his true character known to the country.

Com. Campbell had brought with him, to his ship, a near relative, of the name of Read. This young gentleman was one of the midshipmen of the frigate, while Woolsey and Burrows were two of her lieutenants. On a certain occasion, when the latter was "filled with wine," he became pugnacious, and came to *voies de fait* with his friend Woolsey. The latter, always an excellently tempered man, as well as one of great personal strength, succeeded in getting his riotous messmate down on the ward-room floor, where he dictated the terms of peace. As such an achievement, notwithstanding Burrows' condition, could not be effected without some tumult and noise, the fact that two of the ward-room officers had come to something very like blows, if not actually to that extremity, necessarily became known to their neighbors in the steerage. From the steerage, the intelligence traveled to the cabin, and, next morning, both Woolsey and Burrows were placed under arrest. As between the two parties to the scene nothing further passed or was contemplated, they were particularly good friends, and the offender no sooner came to his senses than he expressed his regrets, and no more was thought of the affair. Capt. Campbell himself was willing to overlook it, when he learned

the true state of things, and all was forgotten but the manner in which it was supposed the commodore obtained his information. That the last came from some one in the steerage was reasonably certain, and the ward-room officers decided that the informer must have been Mr. Read, on account of his near consanguinity to the commanding officer. On a consultation, it was resolved to send Mr. Read to coventry, which was forthwith done.

For a long time, Mr. Read was only spoken to by the gentlemen of the ward-room on duty. They even went out of their way to invite the other midshipmen to dine with them, always omitting to include the supposed informer in their hospitalities. Any one can imagine how unpleasant this must have been to the party suffering, who bore it all, however, without complaining. At length Woolsey, while over a glass of wine in the cabin, ascertained from the commodore himself the manner in which the latter had obtained his knowledge of the fracas. It was through his own clerk, who messed in the steerage.

The moment an opportunity offered, Woolsey, than whom a nobler or better-hearted man never existed, went up to young Read on the quarter-deck, and, raising his hat, something like the following conversation passed between them.

“You must have observed, Mr. Read, that the officers of the ward-room have treated you coldly, for some months past?”

“I am sorry to say I have, sir.”

“It was owing to the opinion that you had informed

Com. Campbell of the unpleasant little affair that took place between Mr. Burrows and myself."

"I have supposed it to be owing to that opinion, sir."

"Well, sir, we have now ascertained that we have done you great injustice, and I have come to apologize to you for my part of this business, and to beg you will forget it. I have it from your uncle, himself, that it was Mr. ——."

"I have all along thought the commodore got his information from that source."

"Good Heaven! Mr. Read, had you intimated as much, it would have put an end at once to the unpleasant state of things which has so long existed between yourself and the gentlemen of the ward-room."

"That would have been doing the very thing for which you blamed me, Mr. Woolsey—turning informer."

Woolsey frequently mentioned this occurrence, and always in terms of high commendation of the self-denial and self-respect of the midshipman. We had it, much as it is related here, from the former's mouth. It is scarcely necessary to tell those who are acquainted with the navy that the young midshipman was the present Commodore George Campbell Read, now in command of the coast of Africa squadron.

The Constitution was kept out on the station some months longer than had been intended, in consequence of the attack that was made on the Chesapeake, the ship that was fitted out to relieve her. This delay caused the times of the crew to be up, and the frigate

was kept waiting at Gibraltar in hourly expectation of this relief. Instead of receiving the welcome news that the anchors were to be lifted for home, the commodore was compelled to issue orders to return to some port aloft. These orders produced one of the very few mutinies that have occurred in the American marine, the people refusing to man the capstan bars. On this trying occasion, the lieutenants of the ship did their duty manfully. They rushed in to the crowd, brought out the ringleaders by the collar, and, sustained by the marine guard, which behaved well, they soon had the ship under complete subjection. This was done too, as the law then stood, with very questionable authority. Subsequent legislation has since provided for such a dilemma, but it may be well doubted if the majority of the Constitution's crew could have been legally made to do duty on that occasion. So complete, however, was the ascendancy of discipline, that the officers triumphed, and the ship was carried wherever her commander pleased.

Nor was this all. When the Constitution did come home, she went into Boston. Instead of being paid off in that port, which under the peculiarities of her case certainly ought to have been done, orders arrived to take her round to New York. When all hands were called to "up anchor," her officers fully expected another revolt! but, instead of that, the people manned the bars cheerfully, and no resistance was made to the movement. The men, when spoken to in commendation of their good conduct, admitted that they had been so effectually put down on the former occasion, that they entertained no further thoughts of resistance.



Woolsey did his full share of duty in these critical circumstances, as, indeed, did all of her lieutenants.

Woolsey had greatly improved himself not only in his profession, but in his mind generally, during his different Mediterranean cruises. Shortly after the Constitution was paid off, he repaired to Washington, where he remained some time, employed in preparing a system of signals. The year 1808 was one during which the relations between this country and England very seriously menaced war. The government, in anticipation of such an event, saw the necessity of making some provisions of defence on lakes Ontario and Champlain. Woolsey, during his stay at Washington, had so far gained the confidence of the Department, that he was selected to superintend at the construction of, and to command the first regular armaments ever made under the Union, on these inland waters. It was decided to build a brig of sixteen guns on Lake Ontario, and two gun-boats on Champlain. Five officers were detached for this service, including Lieut. Woolsey, who had command on both lakes. Lieut. John Montresor Haswell was sent to Champlain, with Messrs. Walker and Hall, while Woolsey took with himself, to Ontario, Messrs. Gamble and Cooper. It is believed that all these gentlemen are now dead, with the exception of the last, who is here making an imperfect record of some of the service of his old friend and messmate.

The port of Oswego was selected as the place where the brig was to be constructed. The contractors were Christian Bergh and Henry Eckford, both of whom afterwards became known to the country as eminent

constructors and shipwrights. The brig was called the Oneida, and she was laid down on the eastern point that formed one side of the outlet of the river. In 1808 Oswego was a mere hamlet of some twenty, or five-and-twenty, houses, that stood on a very irregular sort of a line, near the water, the surrounding country, for thirty or forty miles, being very little more than a wilderness. On the eastern bank of the river, and opposite to the village, or on the side of the stream on which the Oneida was built, there was but a solitary log-house, and the ruins of the last English fort.

The arrival of a party of officers, together with a strong gang of ship-carpenters, riggers, blacksmiths, &c., produced a great commotion in that retired hamlet, though port it was, and made a sensible change in its condition. For the first time, money began to be seen in the place, the circulating medium having previously been salt. The place was entirely supported by the carrying of the salt manufactured at Salina. Eight or ten schooners and sloops were employed in this business, and the inhabitants of Oswego then consisted of some four or five traders, who were mostly ship-owners, the masters and people of the vessels, boatmen who brought the salt down the river, a few mechanics, and a quarter-educated personage who called himself doctor.\*

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\* The reader can form a sort of idea of the knowledge of the men who then practiced medicine, and who called themselves "doctors" on the frontiers, by the following anecdote. Colonel, then Ensign, Gardner of the "old sixth," had been a student of medicine with Hosack, previously to his entering the army. "*Faute de mieux*," he prescribed for the men under his orders, and the writer of this article, in the familiarity of a messmate, used to say the G of his surname stood for "Galen." When Mr.

Woolsey and his party hired a house and commenced housekeeping, their mess being soon increased by the arrival of a small detachment of the Old Sixth Infantry, under the orders of Lieut. Christie, subsequently the Colonel Christie who died in Canada, during the campaign of 1813. Ensign Gardner accompanied the party. This gentleman rose to the rank of Colonel also, acting as adjutant-general to the division of Gen. Brown in the celebrated campaign of '14, and has since been deputy postmaster-general, auditor of the Post-office Department, &c., &c.

This joint mess made a most merry winter of it. Woolsey was its head by rank, and he was its soul in spirits and resources. Balls, dinners, and suppers were given

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Gardner joined the mess, the "doctor" mentioned in the text was absent, nor did he return until the army officers had been some time at Oswego. The "doctor" and the "mess" were next door neighbors, the former living in a small building that joined the mess-house, cooking for himself, &c., &c. Many a time did the late Capt. Gamble and the writer risk breaking their necks, to crawl out on the doctor's wing and drop snow-balls and other "cooling ingredients," by means of the chimney, into the doctor's mess. The first evening of this personage's return to Oswego, he made his appearance in the mess, where he was cordially received, and formally introduced to the ensign by the writer.

"By the way, Galen, let me make you acquainted with our neighbor, Hippocrates, of whom you have heard us speak so often."

Woolsey, Gamble, and Gardner smiled at the sally, but the smile was converted into a roar when the little doctor held out his hand to Gardner, and answered, with a simplicity that was of proof—

"Don't you mind what Cooper says, *Mr. Galen*; he is always at some foolery or other, and has nicknamed me Hippocrates; why I do not know, but my real name is —."

to the better portion of the inhabitants, and, from being regarded with distrust as likely to interfere with the free-trade principles that the embargo then rendered very decided on all the Canada frontier, Woolsey became highly popular and beloved. He had nothing to do, in fact, with the smugglers, his duty being strictly that of a man-of-war's man.

In the mean time, things did not drag on the point. Eckford was present, in person, and he went into the forest, marked his trees, had them cut, trimmed, and hauled, and in the frame of the Oneida in a very few days. The work advanced rapidly, and a small sloop of war, that was pierced for sixteen guns, soon rose on the stocks. Understanding that the floor-timbers of the salt-droppers never decayed, Woolsey had the frame of this brig filled in with salt, using the current coin of the place for that purpose. In that day, every thing was reduced to the standard value of salt, at Oswego. A barrel of salt on the wharf was counted at two dollars; and so many barrels of salt were paid for a cow, so many for a horse, and one barrel for a week's board of the better quality. The living was excellent, salmon, bass, venison in season, rabbits, squirrels, wild-geese, ducks, &c., abounding. The mess, however, pronounced cranberries the staple commodity of the region. They were uniformly served three times a day, and with venison, ducks, &c., made a most delicious accompaniment. Woolsey was a notable caterer, keeping his mess in abundance. The house had been a tavern, and the bar was now converted into a larder, the cold of that region serving to keep every thing sweet. It did the eye good to examine the collection that was

made in this corner by Christmas! At the fireside, Woolsey was the life of the mess in conversation, anecdote, and amusement. He would have been a treasure on such an expedition as that of Parry's.

One day, an inhabitant of Oswego came running into the mess-house to say that a Lieut. R—, from Kingston, was then on board the brig, in disguise, examining her. The officers were at the table, and Woolsey coolly expressed his regrets that Mr. R. had not let him know of his visit, that he might have had the pleasure of his company at dinner. As the gentleman evidently wished to be incog., however, he could not think of disturbing him. This visit was the precursor of the construction of a ship at Kingston, of a force to overcome the Oneida. The English vessel was called the *Royal George*, mounted twenty-four guns, and was much larger than the American brig. She subsequently figured in Sir James Yeo's squadron, under the name of the *Montreal*. A few months later, while the *Royal George* was still on the stocks, Woolsey had occasion to go to Kingston. He was invited by a friend in that place to pay a visit to the navy-yard, and, putting on his uniform, he went. While on board the new ship, the very officer who had been at Oswego came up and remarked it was contrary to orders to allow foreign officers to examine the vessel. Woolsey apologized, said he was ignorant of the rule, and would retire.

"I have the honor of seeing Mr. R—, I believe," he added, as he was about to quit the ship.

The other admitted he was that person.

"I regret I did not know of the visit you did us the

favor to make on board the Oneida, until it was too late to be of any service to you. The next time, I trust, you will apprize us of your intention, when I shall be extremely happy to let you see all we have that is worth the trouble of examining, and of showing you some of the hospitalities of the place."

It is scarcely necessary to say that the lieutenant looked very foolish, and Woolsey had his revenge. It is proper to add that this personage did not belong to the Royal, but to the Provincial Navy, and was a man of confessedly inferior manners and habits.

The Oneida was launched early in the spring, and was immediately equipped for the lake. Erskine's arrangement, as it was called, occurring soon after, however, she was not immediately used. Woolsey now determined to get a view of Niagara, as he did not know at what moment he might be ordered back to the sea-board. Manning and provisioning the brig's launch, therefore, he and Mr. Cooper sailed from Oswego, late in June, 1809. The commencement of this little voyage was favorable, and it was thought the boat would reach the river in the course of eight-and-forty hours; but the winds proved very variable, and came out fresh ahead. Instead of making the passage in the anticipated two days, the launch was a week out, encountering much bad weather. Relying on his sails, Woolsey had taken but four men, and this was not a force to do much with the oars, so that turning to windward was the business most of the time. Three times the boat beat up to a headland, called the Devil's Nose, and twice it was compelled, by the wind and sea, to bear up, before it could weather it. Four nights

were passed in the boat, two on the beach, and one in a hut on the banks of the Genessee, a few miles below the falls, and of course quite near the present site of Rochester.

All the south shore of Ontario, with here and there some immaterial exception, was then a wilderness! Four days out, the provisions failed, and there was actually a want of food. It was not easy to starve so near the forest, certainly, but the men had been improvident, and a fast of a few hours threw Woolsey on his resources. Even the last cracker was eaten, and fish could not be taken. One old seaman had passed forty years on the lake, and he knew the position of every dwelling that stood near its shore. There might then have been a dozen of these little clearings between the Oswego and the Niagara, and one that contained three or four log-houses was known to be some two or three leagues distant. There was no wind, and the launch was pulled up to a beach where it was easy to land, and at a point at no great distance from these houses. It was so late, however, that it was not thought expedient to search for the habitations that evening. The whole party was about to bivouac supperless, when Mr. Cooper accidentally came across a hedge-hog, which he killed with the sword of a cane. On this animal all hands supped, and very good eating it proved to be.

The next morning, the two gentlemen, accompanied by the old laker and another man, set out in quest of the log-huts, which stood a mile or two inland. One was found at the end of an hour, but no one was near it. It was inhabited, however, and in a pantry were found two loaves of bread, and a baking of dried

whortleberry pies, as well as some milk. Necessity having no law, one loaf, two of the pies, and a gallon of milk were sequestered, two silver dollars being left in their places. After breakfasting, and sending the old man to the boat with some food, the two officers followed their pilot toward the other cabins. These were also found, and in them the mistress of the mansion already invaded. A full confession of what had been done followed, and a proposal was made to purchase the remainder of the pies. This alarmed the good woman, who returned with the party forthwith, but who took things more composedly when she got her hand on the silver. So difficult was it to obtain flour in those isolated clearings that she could not be tempted to sell any thing else, and the party returned to the boat, with about a fourth of a meal remaining in their possession. A breeze springing up, sail was made, and Woolsey proceeded.

Hunger and head winds again brought the adventurers to a stand. A solitary dwelling was known to be at no great distance inland from the point where the boat now was, and again the party landed. The boat entered by a narrow inlet into a large bay, that was familiarly called Gerundegutt, (Irondoquoit,) and was hauled up for the night. The whole party bivouacked supperless.

In the morning, the two officers and three of the men went in quest of the house, which was found, a mile or two inland. The man who lived here was a cockney, who had left London some fifteen years before, and pitched his tent, as he said himself, twenty miles from his nearest neighbors. He went forty miles to mill, by



his account, making most of the journey in a skiff. He had neither bread nor flour to spare, nor would money tempt him. He had four or five sheep, but his wife remonstrated against parting with one of them; she wanted the fleeces to spin, and they had not yet been sheared. Woolsey, however, persuaded the man to have the sheep penned, when the sailors caught a wether, and began to feel his ribs. The animal was pronounced to be in excellent condition. A half eagle was now exhibited, and old Peter, the pilot, got his knife out, ready for work. The woman remonstrated, on a high key, and the cockney vacillated. At one moment he was about to yield; at the next, the clamor of the woman prevailed. This scene lasted near a quarter of an hour, when Woolsey commenced an attack on the lady, by paying compliments to her fine children, three as foul little Christians as one could find on the frontier. This threw the mother off her guard, and she wavered. At this unguarded moment, the man accepted the half eagle, about five times the value of the wether, as sheep sold at that season, in the settled parts of the country, uttered a faint, "Well, captain, since you wish it—" and a signal from Woolsey caused the animal's throat to be cut incontinently. At the next instant the woman changed her mind; but it was too late, the wether was bleeding to death. Notwithstanding all this, the woman refused to be pacified until Woolsey made her a present of the skin and fleece, when the carcass was borne off in triumph.

This sheep was all the food the party had for that day, and it was eaten without salt or bread. Woolsey contrived to make a sort of soup of it, over which he

laughed and feasted, keeping everybody in good humor with his jokes and fine temper. Some scrapings of flour were thrown into the pot, and Woolsey called his dish a "noodle soup."

These things are related more to show the state of the Ontario frontier five-and-thirty years since, than for any great interest they possess of themselves. Provisions were almost of as much importance among the dwellers of the forest, as with the mariner at sea; money itself, though of rare occurrence among them, becoming nearly valueless compared with flour, in particular. Even the Oswego currency, salt, did not abound among them, the difficulties of transportation rendering it of importance to husband the smallest article of subsistence. The party could get no salt to eat with their mutton.

The day the sheep was purchased, the launch went out, and began to turn to windward, in squally weather and against a foul wind. In crossing Genessee Bay it came near filling in a squall, and it was found necessary to bear up for the river. Here the party passed another night, in a solitary log cabin, at, or near the point where the steamers and other craft must now make their harbor. A little bread was got in exchange for some sheep, and milk was purchased. But six hungry sailors seemed to create a famine wherever they went, and next morning the launch went out, though the wind was still foul. Then came the tug at the Devil's Nose, which has been mentioned, and the running to leeward to lie to in smooth water. At length the wind came off the land, when the remainder of the distance was run without much difficulty.

It was just as the day broke, that the party in the launch made the mouth of the Niagara. The lantern was still burning in the light-house; the two forts, the town of Newark, and the appearance of cultivation on every side, had an effect like that of enchantment on those who had been coasting a wilderness for a week. Even Oswego, though an old station, had little the air of a peopled country, but the region along the banks of the Niagara had been settled as long as that on the banks of the Hudson, and the transition was like that of suddenly quitting the forest to be placed in the midst of the labors of man. It was the Fourth of July, and the launch entered the river with an American ensign set. It proceeded to Newark, where the two officers took up their quarters for a week. In an hour a deputation from Fort Niagara came across to inquire who had brought the American ensign, for the first time, in a man-of-war's boat, into that river. On being told, a formal invitation was given to join the officers on the other side in celebrating the day.

Woolsey and his party remained some time in and about the Niagara. He passed up on the upper lake, and paid a visit on board the Adams, a brig that belonged to the War Department, which was subsequently taken by the British, at Hull's surrender, named the Detroit, and cut out from under Fort Erie, by Elliott, in 1812. The return to Oswego was less difficult, and was accomplished in two days. These were the first movements by American man-of-war's men that ever occurred on the great lakes—waters that have since become famous by the deeds of M'Donough, Perry, and Chauncey.

Although the Oneida was put out of commission,

Woolsey still remained in charge of the station that had thus been created. In 1810, his brig was again fitted out, and she continued in service until the declaration of war. In the spring of '12, Woolsey seized an English schooner that was smuggling, brought her in, and had her condemned. This was the vessel that was subsequently lost under Chauncey, under the name of the Scourge. A characteristic anecdote is related of Woolsey, in connection with the sale of some of the effects taken on board this vessel. Every thing on board her was sold, even to some trunks that had belonged to a female passenger. Woolsey took care that the hardship of the case of this lady should be made known, in the expectation no one would be found mean enough to bid against her agent. But in this he was mistaken. When the agent bid five dollars, a blood-sucker of a speculator bid ten—"Twenty!" shouted Woolsey, seating himself on one of the trunks, in a way that said, "I'll have them, if they cost a thousand." This movement drove off the miserable creature, and Woolsey presented the lady her trunks, free of charges.

At the declaration of war, in 1812, which came so unlooked for on the country, and which would not have been made at the time it was but for a concurrence of unexpected circumstances, Woolsey was still in command on Lake Ontario, with the rank of lieutenant. His whole force consisted of the Oneida brig, while the enemy could muster a small squadron of several sail, among which was the Royal George, a ship heavy enough to engage two such vessels as the American brig, with every chance of success. As soon as the Oneida was actively employed, the naval station had

been removed from Oswego to Sackett's Harbor, where she was lying at the declaration of war. On the 19th of July, the enemy appeared in the offing, with the Royal George, Earl of Moira, Duke of Gloucester, Seneca, and Simcoe. The two first were ships, the third was a brig, and the two last schooners. As soon as apprised of the presence of this force, Woolsey got the Oneida under way, and went out, with the view of passing the enemy, and escaping to the open lake, in the hope of being able to separate his enemies in chase. But finding this impossible, he beat back into the harbor, and anchored his brig directly opposite to its entrance, under the bank that is now occupied by Madison Barracks. The utmost activity was shown in making this arrangement, and in landing all the guns on the off side of the brig, and in placing them in battery on the bank.

Finding that the enemy was slowly working up on the outside of the peninsula, Woolsey now repaired in person to a small work that had been erected on the high land above the navy-yard, and made his preparations to open on the English from that point. A long thirty-two had been sent on for the Oneida, but never mounted, being much too heavy for that brig, of which the armament consisted of twenty-four pound carronades. This gun Woolsey had caused to be mounted on its pivot, in the work named, and, as soon as the enemy got within range, he opened on them with it. The English had captured a boat in the offing, and sent in a demand for the surrender of the Oneida and the Lord Nelson, under the penalty of destroying the place, in the event of refusal. This demand Woolsey

answered with his long Tom, when a cannonading that lasted two hours succeeded. As the enemy kept at long shot, little damage was done, though the English were supposed to have suffered sufficiently to induce them to bear up and abandon the attempt. Although this affair was not very bloody, Woolsey did all that circumstances would allow ; he preserved his brig, and saved the town. He was assisted by a small body of troops in the work. If the enemy did not press him harder, the fault was their own ; he had not the means of acting on the offensive.

The government deciding to increase its force on Lake Ontario, Com. Chauncey was ordered to assume the command. Woolsey continued second in rank all that season, however, retaining the command of the Oneida. He was in charge of this brig in the spirited dash that Chauncey made against Kingston, in November, on which occasion the Oneida was warmly engaged, receiving some damage, and having four of her crew killed and wounded. This attack virtually closed the war on the lake for the season, as the affair of Sackett's Harbor had commenced it.

Both parties building in the course of the winter, it was found necessary to send several officers to Ontario, who ranked Lieut. Com. Woolsey. As this was done only to take charge of new vessels, he ever after was employed in command, when employed at all. Woolsey was second in command, however, at the attack on York, retaining his own brig, the commodore having hoisted his pennant in the Madison. Woolsey was also present at the landing and the attack on the batteries of Fort George, still commanding the Oneida, with the

rank of lieutenant. As Perry was present on this occasion, our subject was only third in rank among the sea-officers engaged.

Shortly after the landing at Fort George, Woolsey was promoted to be a commander, though he did not learn the fact for some time. His name appears as the seventh in a batch of fifteen. Two of his juniors, Trenchard and Elliott, were already on Lake Ontario, and several of his seniors were shortly afterward sent there. In all the manœuvring, and in the skirmishes which took place between Commodores Chauncey and Yeo, during the summer of '13, Woolsey still remained in charge of the Oneida, older officers and post-captains coming up with fresh crews for the larger vessels. Sinclair had the Pike, and Crane the Madison, leaving Woolsey the fourth in rank present.

When the squadron returned to port, Woolsey found his new commission, and he was transferred to a large new schooner, called the Sylph, Lieut. Brown succeeding him in his old command, the Oneida. The Sylph was a large, fast-sailing schooner, that carried an awkward armament of four heavy pivot-guns amidships, mounted to fire over all. Woolsey was in this vessel, on the 25th September, when Chauncey so nobly brought the whole English squadron to close action, supported for a considerable time only by Bolton, in the Governor Tompkins, and the Asp, a schooner that the Pike had in tow. This was one of the sharpest affairs of the war, as long as it lasted, and would have been decisive had the Madison and Sylph been able to close; or, had not Sir James Yeo run through his own

line, and taken refuge under the batteries of Burlington Heights.

As is usual, when success does not equal expectation, most of the superior officers received more or less censure, for supposed mistakes on this occasion. It is now well known that a complete defeat would have befallen the enemy had he been hotly pressed, and that he was seriously worsted as it was; but it is easy to discover the avenues to success, after the road has been once thoroughly traveled. It is a fact worthy of being remembered, that not an English vessel was taken in battle, during the whole of the war of 1812, with two very immaterial exceptions, unless she offered freely to engage. The exceptions were the two small craft taken at the close of Perry's victory on Lake Erie, in which the whole English force had, in the first instance, very gallantly offered battle.

Woolsey did not escape criticism in this affair, any more than other commanders. His schooner did not prove of as much service as she might have been, on account of the awkwardness of her armament, which was changed to broadside guns, as soon as the squadron went into port again. Woolsey alleged that he was compelled to tow a large schooner, as was the fact with the Madison. Neither dared to cast off the tow, in the presence of the commodore, and the latter had sufficient reasons for not ordering them to do so. Woolsey very frankly admitted, however, that he impaired the sailing of the Sylph, by surging on the tow-line in the hope it would part; a false step, that dropped his schooner so far astern that she greatly embarrassed him by her yawing. It is by no means certain Sir James Yeo would



have engaged at all, could the whole of the American force have closed at the same time, and he always had Burlington Bay under his lee.

A few days after this action, Chauncey chased to the eastward, under a crowd of canvas, with the mistaken notion that the English had got past him in the night. In the afternoon of the 5th October, seven sail were made ahead, and it was supposed the British squadron was leading down the lake. An hour later, the vessels ahead were made out to be schooners, when the commodore signalled the Sylph and Lady of the Lake to cast off their tows. This was no sooner done than these two fast schooners shot swiftly ahead. Seeing their danger, the enemy set fire to the dullest craft, and separated. The Pike now cast off her tow, and she soon succeeded in capturing three of the enemy. Woolsey soon after joined with a fourth, and, continuing on, next morning he brought a fifth out from the Ducks. The prizes were gun-vessels, and near 300 prisoners were made in them, including a detachment of troops. Two of these vessels were the schooners Chauncey had lost in his action with Sir James, earlier in the season. This affair substantially closed the cruising service of that year.

Woolsey got a new vessel for the season of 1814. She was a large brig of twenty-two guns, called the Jones, and proved a fast and good vessel. Previously to the equipment of this vessel, however, he was sent to superintend the transportation of guns and cables, from Oswego to the Harbor, by water. This was very delicate service, as the enemy had obtained the temporary command of the lake, by building. He was at the

Oswego Falls, engaged in this duty, when the English made their descent at Oswego. Woolsey showed much address on this occasion. The enemy possessing so many means of obtaining information, he was compelled to resort to artifice—spreading a report that the direction of the stores was to be changed. Allowing sufficient time for this rumor to reach the enemy, he caused as many guns and cables to be run over the falls as he had boats to carry them in, and immediately went down the river. At dusk, on the evening of the 20th May, the look-outs seeing nothing in the offing, he went out with a brigade of nineteen heavy boats. The night proved to be dark and rainy, and the men toiled until daylight at the oars. When light returned, the boats were at the mouth of Big Salmon River. Here the party was met by a small detachment of Indians; a party of riflemen, under Major Appling, having formed the guard from Oswego. It was found that one boat had parted company in the night. This boat, as it was afterward ascertained, attempted to pass the blockading squadron, and to go direct to the Harbor by water. It was captured by the English.

Woolsey went on, and entered Big Sandy Creek, with his charge, agreeably to a previous understanding. In the mean time, Sir James Yeo, learning the situation of the brigade, from the crew of the captured boat, sent a strong party, covered by three gun-boats, to capture it. The English entered the creek with confidence, throwing grape and cannister into the bushes ahead of them, from some very heavy carronades. Woolsey set about discharging his guns and cables, in order to secure them, while Major Appling placed his command in am-

bush, a short distance below the boats. As the English advanced they were met by a most destructive fire, and every man of their party was captured. Among the prisoners were two captains, four sea lieutenants, and two midshipmen. The stores were safely conveyed to the Harbor, and Chauncey was enabled to raise the blockade, as soon as he could arm his new ships.

After the American squadron got out, Woolsey commanded the Jones 22. He was only the sixth in rank on the lake this summer, there being several captains present, beside two commanders that were his seniors. The Jones was kept in the squadron until Chauncey had swept the lake, but the commodore going off Kingston with a diminished force, in the hope of tempting Sir James to come out, he ordered Woolsey to cruise between Oswego and the Harbor, in order to keep the communication between these two important points free. At a later day Woolsey was sent to join Ridgely, who was blockading the Niagara. On this station the Jefferson and the Jones experienced a tremendous gale, in which the former had to throw some of her guns overboard.

The last service on the lake that season, was in transporting the division of Gen. Izard to the westward. Shortly after, Chauncey collected all his force at the Harbor, and prepared to repel an attack, which it was expected the English would make, having got their two-decker out.

Peace being made the succeeding winter, most of the officers and crews were transferred to the seaboard. Woolsey, however, was left in charge of the station, where he remained for many years. There was a vast

amount of property to take care of, and a little fleet of dismantled vessels. This continued for several years, but gradually the charge was reduced, officer after officer was withdrawn, ship after ship was broken up, until, in the end, the trust was one that might well be confided to a subordinate. In 1817, Woolsey was promoted to be a captain, and not long after he married a lady of the name of Tredwell, a member of the Long Island family of that name.

Woolsey passed the flower of his days on Lake Ontario. No doubt this was of disservice, by withdrawing him, for many years, from the more active duties of his profession. But he liked, and was liked in, that quarter of the country, and family ties came in aid of old associations to keep him there. After remaining something like fifteen years in the lake service, however, he got the *Constellation* frigate, then attached to the West India Squadron. Com. Warrington had his pennant in his ship, most of the time, and there being very little difference in the dates of the commissions of these two officers, Woolsey always spoke with feeling of the extreme delicacy with which he was treated by his superior. On his return from this station, he had charge of the Pensacola Yard.

After quitting Pensacola, Woolsey preferred his own claims for a squadron, and he was sent to the coast of Brazil, where he commanded, with a broad pennant, the usual term. This was the last of his service afloat, or, indeed, ashore. His health began to decline, not long after his return, and he died in 1838.

Commodore Woolsey was of the middle height, sailor-built, and of a compact, athletic frame. His counte-

nance was prepossessing, and had singularly the look of a gentleman. In his deportment, he was a pleasing mixture of gentleman-like refinement and seaman-like frankness. His long intimacy with frontier habits could not, and did not, destroy his early training, though it possibly impeded some of that advancement in his professional and general knowledge, which he had so successfully commenced in early life. He was an excellent seaman, and few officers had more correct notions of the rules of discipline. His familiar association with all the classes that mingle so freely together in border life, had produced a tendency, on his excellent disposition, to relax too much in his ordinary intercourse, perhaps, but his good sense prevented this weakness from proceeding very far. Woolsey rather wanted the grimace than the substance of authority. A better-hearted man never lived. All who sailed with him loved him, and he had sufficient native mind, and sufficient acquired instruction, to command the respect of many of the strongest intellects of the service.

The widow of Com. Woolsey still lives. She has several children, and we regret to say, like those of her sex who survive the public servants of this country, she is left with few of the world's goods to console her. Woolsey's eldest son is in the navy, and has nearly reached the rank of lieutenant.

## OLIVER HAZARD PERRY.

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THE family of Perry has now been American for near two centuries. The first of the name on this side of the Atlantic, was a native of Devonshire, who emigrated to the new world about the middle of the seventeenth century, settling at Plymouth, in Massachusetts. Being of the sect of Friends, however, this residence proved to be as unfavorable to the indulgence of his peculiar religious opinions, as that from which he had so lately migrated in his native island, and he was induced to go deeper into the wilderness. He finally established himself, accompanied by others of his persuasion, on Narragansett Bay, at a place called South Kingston. Here Edmund Perry, for so was the emigrant called, acquired a landed property of some extent, from the Indians, and by fair purchase, which has continued in the possession of his descendants down to our own time.

From Edmund Perry was descended, in the fourth generation, Christopher Raymond Perry, the father of the subject of this memoir, who was born in 1761. This gentleman chose to follow the sea. After serving for some time in private armed vessels of war, during the Revolution, he turned to the merchant's service for employment when peace was made, being at that time

a very young man, as is seen by the date of his birth. In the course of one of his early voyages, Mr. Perry met with a passenger of the name of Sarah Alexander, a lady of Irish birth, but of Scotch extraction, whom he married, in the year 1784. The fruits of this union were a family of sons, most, if not all, of whom have been in the naval service of the country, and of daughters, one of whom, at least, is now the widow of an officer of rank. From this marriage, indeed, have been probably derived more officers of the navy, than from any other one connection, that of the family of Nicholson excepted. The lady who so soon found herself a wife and a mother, in the country of her adoption, proved a valuable acquisition to her new relatives, and left a strong and useful impression on most of those who have derived their existence from her.

The first child of the marriage between Christopher Raymond Perry and Sarah Alexander, was the subject of this memoir. He was called Oliver Hazard, after an ancestor of that name who had died just previously to his birth, as well as after an uncle of the same appellation, who had been recently lost at sea. Oliver Hazard Perry was born on the 20th of August, 1785. The early years of the child were distinguished by no unusual occurrences. He was kept at school, at different places, but principally in the vicinity of the residences of his own family. The armaments against France, however, induced a sudden and material increase of the naval force of the country; and in June, 1798, Christopher Raymond Perry, the father of Oliver, received an appointment as a captain in the new ma-

rine. Capt. Perry's commission placed him the eighth on the list of officers of his rank, but there being no ship of a suitable size for him to take, he was directed to superintend the construction of a vessel that was soon after laid down, at Warren, in his native State. On this occasion, Capt. Perry, accompanied by his wife, removed to Warren, leaving the household in charge of their eldest son, then a boy of only thirteen. This may be said to have been Oliver Perry's first command, and it is the tradition of the family that he acquitted himself of these novel duties with great prudence, kindness and impartiality. It was certainly a high trust to repose in a boy of his tender years, and proves the complete confidence his parents had in his discretion, temper and good sense. At this period of his life, as indeed he continued to be to a much later day, the youth was obliging, active and of singularly prepossessing appearance; and is said to have been an object of great interest within the limited circle of his acquaintance.

Captain Perry's vessel was a small frigate, that was very appropriately named the General Greene. She appears on the registers of the department as a vessel of 645 tons, and rating as a 24. In the journals of the day, however, she is oftener called a 32, which was about the number of guns she actually carried, while her true rate would have properly made her a 28. This ship was not ready to sail until the spring of the year 1799. By this time her captain's eldest son had resolved to enter on a career similar to that of his father's, and, having some time previously announced his wishes, a warrant was issued to him as a midship



man. Perry's appointment was dated April 7th, 1799, and made one of a small batch which occurred about that time, generally with intervals of a day between each warrant, and which contained the names of Trippe, Robert Henly, Joseph Bainbridge, Noel Cox, &c., &c.

Soon after Perry joined his father's ship, or about the middle of May, the General Greene sailed to join the force in the West Indies. Capt. Perry was directed to proceed to the Havana, and to look after the trade in that quarter, as "well as that which passes down the straits of Bahama to the Spanish main." After remaining a few weeks on her station, the yellow fever broke out in the ship, and she returned to Newport about the close of the month of July. In this short cruise Perry was first initiated in his sea service, and it is a singular circumstance that it was marked by the appearance of that dire disease by which he was, himself, subsequently lost to the country.

By bringing his ship north, Capt. Perry soon purified her, and she sailed again, for the same station, a few weeks later. Thence she went off St. Domingo, to cruise against Rigaud's barges, which committed many and sanguinary outrages; his orders directing him to circumnavigate the whole island of St. Domingo. While employed on this service, the General Greene found several of the brigand's light craft at anchor under the protection of some batteries. The ship stood in, and anchoring, a warm cannonade commenced. In about half an hour the batteries were silenced, as was supposed with some loss, but a vessel which had the appearance of a French frigate heaving

in sight in the offing, Capt. Perry lifted his anchor, and went out to meet her, without taking possession of his conquests. The stranger proved to be a French built vessel, that had changed masters ; being, at that time, in the English navy.

The General Greene next went off Jaquemel to assist Toussaint to reduce the place. The ship is said to have been very serviceable on this duty, and to have had her full share in the success which attended the expedition. In all this service, Perry was present, of course, though in the subordinate station of a young midshipman. It was the commencement of his career, and no doubt had an influence in giving him useful opinions of duty, and in favorably forming his character.

The General Greene was placed under the particular command of Com. Talbot, by special orders from the department, of the date of September 3d, 1799, but did not fall in with that officer until April of the following year, when Capt. Perry reached Cape François, the point from which he had sailed to make the circuit of the island. Here the latter officer was directed to proceed to the mouth of the Mississippi, and receive on board Gen. Wilkinson and family ; that officer being then at the head of the army. The frigate arrived off the Balize about the 20th of the month, and sailed again for Newport on the 10th of May. An act of spirit manifested by the elder Perry, on his return home from the Balize, is recorded to his credit, and as affording a proof of the school in which his gallant son was educated. The General Greene had taken an American brig under convoy that was bound into the Havana. Off the latter port, an English two-decked

ship fired a shot ahead of the brig to bring her to. Capt. Perry directing his convoy to disregard the signal, and the wind being light, the Englishman sent a boat in chase of the brig. When sufficiently near, the General Greene fired a shot ahead of the boat, as a hint to go no closer. The boat now came alongside of the frigate, and the two-decker closed at the same time, when the latter demanded the reason of the General Greene's shot. The answer was that it had been fired to prevent the boat from boarding a vessel under her convoy. The English officer, who must have known that this reply, which manifested far more spirit in the year 1800 than it would to-day, was in strict conformity with maritime usage, had the prudence not to persist, and the honor of the American flag was vindicated. This circumstance, taken in connection with a few others of a similar character, which occurred about the same time, had a strong influence in elevating the reputation of the infant navy, and in erasing an unfavorable impression that had been made by the impressment of five men, two years earlier, from on board the Baltimore, 20.

The crew of the General Greene were paid off, as usual, at the end of the year; or, soon after her second return to Newport. Capt. Perry was continued in command of the ship, however, and orders were sent to prepare her for another cruise; but the negotiations for peace assuming a favorable aspect, the orders were countermanded, and the ship was carried to Washington and laid up. The peace-establishment law reduced the list of captains from twenty-eight to nine, and, as Capt. Perry was not one of those retained, he retired

from service, with Talbot, Sever, the elder Decatur, Tingey, Little, Geddes, Robinson, and others. His son Oliver, however, belonged to the one hundred and fifty midshipmen that the law directed to be retained, and his fortunes were cast for life in the service.

Young Perry was left on shore, to pursue his studies, from the time the General Greene returned from her second cruise, until the spring of the year 1802, when he was ordered to join the Adams 28, Capt. Campbell, which ship was then fitting for the Mediterranean station. This frigate, known to the navy by the *sobriquet* of the little Adams, was a vessel a hundred tons smaller than the General Greene, but was deemed one of the fastest ships the country had sent into the West Indies, during the late contest. Her present commander was an officer of gentleman-like habits and opinions, and well suited to inspire young men with the manners and maxims appropriate to their caste. The ship also enjoyed the advantage of possessing a thorough practical seaman in her first lieutenant, the late Com. Hull, who, a short time before, had filled the same station on board the Constitution 44, Com. Talbot.

The Adams sailed from Newport, June 10th, 1802, and arrived at Gibraltar about the middle of July, where she found Com. Morris, in the Chesapeake 38, who sent her up as far as Malaga with a convoy. On her return from this duty, the ship was left below to watch a Tripolitan that was then lying at Gibraltar, the remainder of the squadron going aloft. Here the Adams passed the winter, cruising in the Straits much of the time; a duty that the young men in her found

irksome beyond a question, but which they also must have found highly instructive, as nothing so much familiarizes officers to manœuvering, as handling a ship in narrow waters, and with the land constantly aboard. One of the favorite traditions of the service relates to the steady and cool manner in which Hull worked the Adams while employed on this duty, the ship being in great danger of going ashore on the rocks. Six or eight months of such service is equal, in the way of experience, to two or three years of running from port to port, in as straight lines as can be made ; or of making sail in good weather, and of reducing it in bad. The Adams must have commenced her blockade of the Tripolitan about the 21st July, 1802, the day Com. Morris sailed, and remained actively engaged on this duty until relieved by the squadron, which did not reach the rock until the 23d March, 1803; this makes a period of eight months and two days. Apart from the instruction which an ambitious youth like Perry must have been conscious of obtaining under such circumstances, this blockade contained an event which is always an epoch in the life of a young officer. Perry was a favorite with his captain, and being studious, attentive to his duties, sedate and considerate beyond his years, and of a person and manner to set off all these qualities to advantage, that officer gave him an acting appointment as a lieutenant. To enhance the gift, Capt. Campbell made out his orders on the young man's birth-day. This was transferring young Perry from the steerage to the ward-room the day he was seventeen, one of the very few instances of promotion so

young, that have occurred in the American navy.\* As this promotion took place on the 21st August, 1803, and Perry's warrant was dated April 7th, 1799, it follows that, in addition to his youth, he got this important step when he had been in the service less than four years and five months.

As soon as the squadron came down to Gibraltar, the Adams was sent aloft again with a convoy. As the ship touched at many different ports on the North shore, our young lieutenant had various occasions to visit places at which she stopped, and to store his mind with the pleasing and useful information with which that region more abounds, probably, than any other portion of the globe. There is little doubt that one of the reasons why the American marine early obtained a thirst for a knowledge that is not uniformly connected with the pursuits of a seaman, and a taste which, perhaps was above the level of that of the gentlemen of the country, was owing to the circumstance that the wars with Barbary called its officers so much, at the most critical period of its existence, into that quarter of Europe. Travellers to the old world were then extremely rare, and the American who, forty years ago, could converse, as an eye-witness, of the marvels of the

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\* The writer knows of but two other instances of promotions at so very young an age. One was that of the present Capt. Cooper; and the other that of the late Lt. Augustus Ludlow, who fell in the Chesapeake. In both these instances, he thinks the gentlemen were a little turned of seventeen. Mr. Cooper, however, got a commission, which was not the case with either Perry or Ludlow. Lawrence must have been made acting when little more than eighteen, and Stewart's original appointment was made when he was only nineteen.

Mediterranean; who had seen the remains of Carthage, or the glories of Constantinople; who had visited the Coliseum, or was familiar with the affluence of Naples, was more than half the time, in some way or other, connected with the Navy.

In May, the Adams, in company with the rest of the squadron, appeared before Tripoli, but no service of importance occurred in which there is any evidence that Perry participated. Soon after, Com. Morris left the coast, and his ships separated. The Adams cruised along the south shore, rejoining the squadron at Gibraltar. This gave Perry an opportunity of seeing some of the towns of Barbary. At Gibraltar, the commodore took the Adams, in person, she being the ship which he had first commanded in the service, and came home in her, Capt. Campbell going to the John Adams, but taking no officers with him.

Perry reached America in the Adams, in November, 1803. His cruise had lasted eighteen months; much of the time the vessel being actually under her canvas. This was, in every respect, a most important piece of service to the young man, and probably laid the principal foundation of his professional character, besides contributing largely to his information and manners as a man. On his return, he is said to have devoted himself earnestly to the studies peculiar to his calling, and to have made laudable efforts to do credit to himself in his new rank. The young officers, however, who made the Mediterranean cruise in 1802 and 1803, were unfortunate as to the time of their service. The following season, or that of the summer of 1804, was the eventful period of the Tripolitan war, and this was the moment

when accident left Perry ashore, devoting himself to useful pursuits, it is true, but removing him from those scenes of active warfare in which he was so well qualified to become distinguished. From the close of November, 1803, until the summer of 1804, Perry was on furlough, and at home. One cannot know this, without regretting that a young officer of his peculiar fitness for the service which then occurred before Tripoli, should not have had it in his power to have been with Preble.

In May, or June, of the latter year, however, Lieut. Perry received orders to join the *Constellation*, at Washington, then fitting for the Mediterranean, again, under his old commander and friend, Capt. Campbell. The ship sailed in July, and on the 10th of September, or six days after the explosion of the *Intrepid*, and just as the last shot had virtually, if not actually, been fired at the town, she appeared off Tripoli, the *President* 44, Com. S. Barron, in company. The *Constellation* was subsequently employed near Derne, in sustaining the operations of Gen. Eaton, but her size rendered her of no great use on that coast.

Among the vessels off Derne, was the *Nautilus* 14, the schooner of the lamented Somers, and being in want of a first lieutenant, Capt. Campbell ordered Perry to join her in that capacity. Perry was now in his twenty-first year, and had been about six years in the navy. He had made himself a very good seaman, and was accounted a particularly efficient deck-officer. His acquirements were suited to his profession, his manners good and considerate, his appearance unusually pleasing, his steadiness of character such as to awaken confidence, and his mind, if not of an unusually high order,



was sufficient to command respect. The new situation in which he was placed, was one to put his professional qualities to the test, and he acquitted himself, notwithstanding his youth, with great credit.

Perry remained in the *Nautilus* till the autumn of 1805, when Com. Rodgers gave him an order to join the *Constitution*, as one of his own lieutenants. As this officer was very rigid in his exactions of duty, and particularly fastidious in the choice of subordinates, it was a compliment, though no sinecure, to be thus selected, and there can be no question that it was an advantage to one disposed to do his whole duty to serve under his immediate eye. In this ship Perry remained until the autumn of the succeeding year, when he went to the *Essex*, as second lieutenant, following the commodore, who was about to return home, where they arrived in October.

Perry had now acquired his profession, and obtained respectable rank. At this period of his life, he was known as one of the more promising young officers of the navy, and had his full proportion of friends in all the grades of the service. He was employed in superintending the building and equipment of gun-boats, soon after his arrival at home, and this was the period of his life when he is said to have formed the attachment which, a few years later, produced a union with the lady he married. After seeing the gun-boats equipped, he was attached to them, for some years, with the command of a division. This disagreeable service, however, finally ended. After superintending the construction of a second *batch*, for these useless craft were literally put into the water in flotillas, in

1808, he was appointed in April, 1809, to his first proper command. The vessel he got was a schooner, called *The Revenge*, which had been bought into the service, and which proved to be a very respectable cruiser of her class; her armament consisting of fourteen short and light guns. His predecessor in this schooner was Jacob Jones, who had been one of the oldest lieutenants, if not the very oldest lieutenant in the navy, at the time he commanded her. As Perry had several seniors on the list, his selection for this command is another proof of the estimation in which he was held by his superiors.

The *Revenge* had been introduced into the navy more as a despatch-boat than as a regular cruiser, but she was subsequently put into the coast squadron, and was in that situation when Perry took her. After passing the summer of 1809, and the winter of 1809-10, in this duty, cruising most of the time on the Northern and Eastern coast, Perry was ordered to take his vessel to Washington for repairs, in April of the latter year. From this place the *Revenge* sailed on the 20th of May, for the Southern coast, where she was to be stationed. While thus employed, two occasions occurred to enable Perry to prove the spirit by which he was animated, and, on both of which, he acquitted himself with credit. The first was the seizure of an American vessel that had been run away with by her master, an Englishman by birth, who had put her under English colors, as English built. The vessel was lying in the Spanish waters, off Amelia Island, and two small English cruisers were at anchor near her. The Spanish authorities consented to the seizure, which was made by the *Revenge*, sustained by three gun-boats, and the vessel

brought off in the presence of the two English cruisers. It is impossible to say whether the English officers were, or were not apprised of the true circumstances of the case, or how far they were willing to see justice done ; but the spirit of Perry is not affected by these facts, as he proceeded in total ignorance of what might be their determination. While carrying his prize off to sea, an English sloop of war was met, the captain of which sent a boat with a request that the commander of the *Revenge* would come on board and explain his character. The occurrence between the *Leopard* and the *Chesapeake* was then fresh, and the utmost feeling existed in the service on the subject of British aggressions. Perry refused to quit his vessel, and prepared for hostilities. His plan was to throw all hands on board his expected foe, and to trust the chances to a hand-to-hand struggle. The *Revenge* was well manned, and so judicious and cool were his arrangements, that the probability of success was far from hopeless. The desperate resort to force, however, was avoided by the discretion of the English officer, who did not press his demand.

In August, 1810, the *Revenge* returned north, and was stationed on the coast in the vicinity of Newport. On the 8th of January, 1811, this schooner was unfortunately wrecked on Watch Hill Reef, though many of her effects were saved through the activity of her commander and his people, aided by boats from the squadron then lying in the Thames. This accident was to be attributed to the influence of the tides in thick weather, but the blame, if blame there was, fell solely on the coast pilot, who was in charge at the time. It was one of those occurrences, however, to which all

seamen are liable, and which it surpasses human means to foresee or prevent, while the duty on which the vessel was employed was performed. Perry's conduct, on this occasion, was highly spoken of at the time, and he at least gained in the estimation of the service by an event which, perhaps, tries a commander's true qualities and reputation as much as any other which can occur to him. A court, consisting of Com. Hull, Lieut. now Com. Morris, and Lieut. the late Capt. Ludlow, fully acquitted Perry of all blame, while it extolled his coolness and judgment. By this accident Perry lost a command, which he had held about twenty-one months.

On the 5th May, 1811, Perry was married to Elizabeth Champlin Mason, of Rhode Island, the lady to whom he had now been attached since the commencement of the year 1807, and to whom he had been affianced for most of the intervening time. At the time of his marriage, Perry was in his twenty-sixth year, and his bride was about twenty. Not long after, he was promoted to the rank of master and commander. Perry obtained this step when he had not been quite fourteen years in service, and at the age of twenty-six. This was a fair rate of preferment, and one that would be observed even at the present time, with a proper division of the grades, and a judicious restriction on the appointment of midshipmen, a class of officers that ought never to be so numerous as to allow of idleness on shore, and which, in time of peace, should be so limited as to give them full employment when at sea.

The declaration of war, in 1812, found Perry in command of a division of gun-boats on the Newport

station. This being a duty in which the chance of seeing any important service was very trifling, his first and natural desire was to get to sea in a sloop of war. Most of the vessels of this class, which the navy then possessed, however, were commanded by his seniors in rank, and those that were not, accident had put in the hands of officers whom it would have been ungracious to supersede. Anxious to be in a more active scene, in the course of the winter of 1812-13, he made an offer to serve on the Lakes. This offer was accepted, and in February, 1813, he was ordered to report to Com. Chauncey, at Sackett's Harbor, and to take with him such of the officers and men of his flotilla as were suited to the contemplated service.

Perry met his commanding officer at Albany, on the 28th February, and together they set out for the Harbor, which place they reached on the 3d of March. Here Perry remained until the 16th, when he was ordered to Lake Erie, with instructions to superintend the equipment of a force on those waters. On the 27th, he arrived at the port of Presque Isle, or Erie, and immediately urged on the work, which had been already commenced. There is a portion of military duty that figures but little in histories and gazettes, but which is frequently the most arduous of any on which an officer can be employed. To this class of service belong the preparations that are limited by insufficient means, the procuring of supplies, and contending with the difficulties of hurried levies, undisciplined men, and imperfect equipments. These were the great embarrassments with which Washington had to contend in the war of the Revolution, and his conquests over them entitle him

to more credit than he might have obtained for a dozen victories.

As respects the state of the Northern frontier during the last war, the reader of history is not apt fully to appreciate all the obstacles that were to be overcome in conducting the most important operations. In 1813, with very immaterial exceptions, the whole lake frontier, on the American side of those inland waters, was little different from a wilderness. The few roads which communicated with the older parts of the country, were scarcely more than avenues cut through the forests, and not always these; while the streams that it was indispensable to navigate were often obstructed by rapids and even falls, frequently filled with drift wood, and rarely aided by locks, or other similar inventions. Supplies usually had to be brought from the Atlantic towns, and most of the artisans were transported from the sea coast, into those distant wilds. Against the difficulties of this nature Perry had now to contend, and he exerted himself to the utmost. At different periods he received reinforcements of officers and men, and in the course of the spring all of his vessels were got into the water. Still a great deal remained to be done; stores, guns, munitions of war, and, to a certain extent, crews having yet to be assembled.

While thus employed, Perry received the welcome intelligence that the squadron and army below were about to make a descent on Fort George. This enterprise had been contemplated for some time, and Commodore Chauncey had promised to give our young commander the charge of the seamen that were to land.

No sooner did he get the information that the expedition was about to take place, than he left Erie, in a four-oared boat, on a dark but placid night, and after a pleasant passage of twenty-four hours he reached Buffalo. In this passage he was accompanied by a sailing master of the name of Dobbins, who was well acquainted with the lake, and who, in fact, had been his predecessor in the command on Erie, having laid down and nearly built several of the vessels that subsequently formed the fighting squadron, besides having got out most of the timber of the two principal craft, previously to Perry's having reached the lake. The British batteries were then passed in the same boat, as it descended the Niagara river. In descending the river, Perry encountered no danger, falling in with no enemy to obstruct his passage. On reaching Schlosser he landed. From Schlosser, Perry and Dobbins proceeded on foot to the falls, leaving the men with the boat. At the falls a horse was hired for him, and Perry left his companion on his way to Fort Niagara. By the evening of the twenty-fifth he got on board the Madison 24, in which ship Com. Chauncey's pennant was then flying.\*

Chauncey gave his visitor a warm reception. There was a scarcity of officers of rank on the lakes, and Perry had obtained a reputation for zeal and conduct that would be apt to render his presence acceptable on the eve of an important enterprise. When he got on board the ship, he found the officers of the squadron

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\* The reader will find many of the minor incidents related here, differing from those originally given in Graham. The corrections are made on the testimony of an eye-witness and an actor in the events.

assembled to receive their orders, and a general welcome met him. The next morning the commodore went to reconnoitre the enemy's batteries, taking Perry with him, in the *Lady of the Lake*. Arrangements were then made for the descent.

It would not be easy to write a better description of the appearance of the fleet, as it advanced to the attack on this occasion, than has been simply but graphically given by Perry himself, in one of his published letters. "The ship was under way," he says, "with a light breeze from the eastward, quite fair for us; a thick mist hanging over Newark and Fort George, the sun breaking forth in the East, the vessels all under way, the lake covered with several hundred large boats, filled with soldiers, horses and artillery, advancing toward the enemy, altogether formed one of the grandest spectacles I ever witnessed." It had been decided that a body of seamen were to be landed, under the immediate orders of Perry, but some irregularity existing in the movements of the brigades, his duties took a more extended range. As the boats pulled toward the shore, Perry saw that the soldiers, who rowed their own boats, were getting too far to leeward, for the wind had freshened; and, pointing out the circumstance to the commodore, he was desired to put them on the right course. Pulling toward the advance, Perry fortified his authority by requesting Col. Scott, who led the troops in front, to join him, and together they proceeded on the duty, which was successfully and very opportunely performed. Col. Scott now rejoined his command, and Perry pulled on board the schooner that was nearest in, covering the debarkation. Here the lookout



aloft informed him that the British were advancing toward the lake, in force. Aware that the Americans did not expect such a meeting on the shore, Perry now pulled down the whole line to reach Col. Scott, and apprise him of the resistance he was to meet. Before he could reach that point, however, the British appeared on the bank and gave a volley. This unexpected attack checked the advance but a moment; the boats being within fifty yards of the beach at the time, were soon on it, and the troops landed. Perry now went on board the *Hamilton*, a schooner of 9 guns, which vessel maintained a heavy fire of grape and canister on the enemy. Other vessels aided, and the troops forming, rushed up and carried the bank. At this moment, Maj. Gen. Lewis, who was to command in chief on shore, reached the schooner, reconnoitered the ground, and then landed, Perry following him. Throughout all this affair, the latter manifested great temper, the utmost coolness, and a zeal which was certain to carry him into the scenes of danger. Commodore Chauncey mentioned his services honorably in his despatches.

The Americans now had command of the Niagara, and Chauncey profited by it to get several small vessels, that had been bought for the service, but which still lay at Black Rock, past the position of the enemy, and up the current into Lake Erie. Perry superintended this service in person, which was immensely laborious, but was successfully performed, in little more than a day. This was clearing the way for assembling all the force on Lake Erie, at a single point, and he sailed from Buffalo for Erie about the middle of June. At this

time the command of the lake was with the enemy, and it was a great point to collect all the American vessels, in order to make head against him. This was now done, the enemy actually heaving in sight off their port as the last of the Americans arrived.

The English had long maintained a naval force on the great lakes, which was termed the provincial marine. The vessels were employed for the general purposes of a maritime police, for transporting troops, and for conveying supplies. By their means the communications were kept up with the different military posts of the interior, and the command of those inland waters was, at need, effectually secured. The Americans had not imitated this policy. On the upper lakes, however, they kept a brig, which was found almost indispensable to convey the stores needed at the more distant stations, and particularly in the intercourse with the Indians in their vicinity. This brig belonged to the war department, however, and not to the navy. For some years previously to the war she had been commanded by a gentleman of the name of Brevoort, who was then an officer in the 1st Infantry. This brig was called the Adams, and she mounted a few guns. She had fallen into the hands of the enemy at the capture of Michigan, had her name changed to that of Detroit, had been cut out from under Fort Erie the previous autumn by the Americans, and destroyed. This produced the necessity of creating an entirely new force, leaving the command of the lake with the enemy until that object could be effected.

In the face of a thousand obstacles, Perry succeeded in getting his vessels ready to go out by the early part

of August, though he was still greatly in want of officers and of men, particularly of seamen. Capt. Barclay, who commanded the enemy, lay off the port watching him, however, and there existed a serious obstacle in a bar, which extended some distance into the lake. To cross this bar in the presence of the English would have been extremely hazardous, when, fortunately, the latter unexpectedly disappeared, in the Northern board. It is said that Capt. Barclay had accepted an invitation to dine on the Canada shore, and that he passed over with this intention, probably deceived by his spies as to the state of preparation of the Americans. A reinforcement of men was certainly expected from below, and, if acquainted with this fact, the English officer may very well have supposed that his opponent would wait for it.\*

It was of a Sunday afternoon when Perry commenced his movements; a day and an hour when the measure was probably least expected. To cross the bar, it was necessary to lift the larger vessels on camels, and the work required not only great labor, but much time. It was attended with delays and embarrassments, nor was it entirely effected before the British re-appeared. Some distant firing between them and a few of the American small vessels succeeded, but with little or no damage on either side.

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\* The dinner is said to have been given to Barclay, on the 1st or 2d August, 1813, by the inhabitants of a small place called Dover. In replying to a toast, Barclay stated it was his intention to return to Erie next day, where he should find the Yankee brigs hard and fast on the bar, when it would be an easy matter to destroy them. Substantially, Perry gained the victory of the 10th September, at the bar of Erie.

Once in the lake, incomplete as were his crews and his equipments, Perry was decidedly superior to the enemy, who had not yet brought their principal vessel, the *Detroit*, into their squadron. Under the circumstances, therefore, he wisely determined to bring on an action if possible without any unnecessary delay. Getting under way with his vessels, he went off Long Point in search of the enemy, but failing to find them, as they had gone into Malden to join their new ship, he returned to the anchorage off Erie. Here he received the welcome intelligence that a party of seamen was on its way to join him, from the lower squadron. This reinforcement arrived a day or two later. It was under the orders of Capt. Elliott, who had just been promoted to the rank of master and commander.

As soon as possible after the arrival of the party from below, the squadron sailed again in quest of the enemy. After communicating with the army above, and ineffectually chasing a British cruiser, it went into Put In Bay, a haven among some islands that lie in the vicinity of Malden, and was favorably placed for watching the enemy. The malady common to these waters in the Fall of the year, had attacked the crew, and Perry himself was soon included among those on the doctor's list. His case was a very severe one, and to render the matter more grave, all three of the medical officers of the squadron were taken ill also. This was a critical situation to be in, in the face of the enemy, and the more especially, as the vessels were still short of their complements. The latter difficulty, however, was in part remedied, by receiving a hundred volunteers from the army. While lying in this port, the

men were exercised in boats, it being Perry's intention to make an attack on the enemy in that manner, should the latter fail to come out.

Early in September, Perry had so far recovered as to quit his cabin. He now went off Malden to reconnoitre, and to invite the British to meet him. After manœuvring about the head of the lake for a few days, the Americans returned to Put In Bay, on the 6th of September. It would seem Perry received an intimation at Sandusky, that it was the enemy's intention to come out and engage him, as he was short of provisions, and felt the immediate necessity of opening a communication with his supplies. Subsequent intelligence has confirmed this report, and it is now known that the battle which was fought a few days later was actually owing to this circumstance.

As Perry now fully expected that the English would at least attempt to force a passage toward Long Point, he made his final preparations for a general battle. At a meeting of some of his officers, on the evening of the 9th September, it was determined, at all events, to go out next day, and attack the enemy at anchor, should it be necessary. In order, however, that the reader may have a clear idea of the forces of the respective parties in the approaching action, as well as of their distinctive characters, it is now necessary to give lists of the two squadrons, from the best authorities it has been in our power to consult. The vessels under the command of Capt. Perry, and which were present on the morning of the 10th of September, 1813, were as follows; the Ohio, Mr. Dobbins, having been sent down the lake on duty, a few days before, viz.

	Guns.	Metal.
Lawrence, Capt. Perry,	20	2 long 12s, 18 32lb. carronades.
Niagara, Capt. Elliott,	20	2 long 12s, 18 32lb. carronades.
Caledonia, Lieut. Turner,	3	2 long 24s, 1 32lb. carronade.
Ariel, Lieut. Packett,	4	4 12s.
Somers, Mr. Almy,	2	1 long 24, 1 32lb. carronade.
Porcupine, Mr. Snatt,	1	1 long 32.
Scorpion, Mr. Champlin,	2	1 long 24, 1 32lb. carronade.
Tigress, Lieut. Conklin,	1	1 long 32.
Trippe, Lieut. Holdup,	1	1 long 32.

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Total number of guns, 54\*

It is proper to add, that all the guns of all the American vessels, with the exception of those of the Lawrence and the Niagara, were on pivots, and could be used together. The vessels which carried them, however, were without bulwarks, and their crews were exposed to even musketry in a close action. Of these vessels, the Lawrence, Niagara, and Caledonia were brigs; the Trippe was a sloop; and the remainder were schooners.

The force of the British has been variously stated, as to the metal, though all the accounts agree as to the vessels and the number of the guns.† No American

\* Mr. Dobbins, who had a large agency in equipping this force, says, the 32 of the Trippe ought to be given to another vessel, and a 24 substituted in its place.

† It is extremely difficult to get the exact truth in details of this nature. With the best intentions men make mistakes, and the historian is obliged to depend on such authority as he can get. The foregoing has been laid before the world by the English, as Capt. Barclay's official account of his own force. It may have some inaccuracies, but it is doubtless true in the main. A biography of Perry has lately appeared, written by Alexander Slidell Mackenzie, a gentleman who is connected with the family of the late Com. Perry, and who ought to have enjoyed great advantages in collecting many of his personal facts, but the work is

statement of the English metal has ever been officially made, but one was appended to Capt. Barclay's report of the engagement, which should be taken as substantially correct, though a few of its less important details have been questioned by some of the American officers, but not, so far as we have been able to ascertain, on grounds sufficient to render their own recollections certain. The English vessels were as follows, their force being, as stated by Capt. Barclay—

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written in too partisan a spirit to be at all relied on in matters relating to the battle of Lake Erie. As respects the force of the two squadrons, for instance, Capt. Mackenzie has fallen into material mistakes even in relation to the American vessels; or not only is the writer greatly misinformed, but the incidental evidence which has appeared in the course of the controversy that has arisen from this battle, is incorrect. Thus Capt. Mackenzie puts the force of the Somers at "two long thirty-twos." Mack. Per. p. 228, vol. i. Now this is contrary to the English official account, contrary to every other American account the writer can get, and contrary to the certificate of Mr. Nichols, who commanded the Somers, after Mr. Almy was sent below. This officer in explaining the silly story about Capt. Elliott's dodging a shot, says—"the quarter-gunner at the 32, being about to fire," &c. This language would not have been used had there been *two* thirty-twos. Capt. Elliott has more than once distinctly called the 32 a *carronade*, in speaking of this transaction to the writer, and, as the fact cannot affect any question connected with himself, his testimony is certainly good on such a point. Capt. Mackenzie gives the Scorpion *two* long guns, whereas the writer believes she had but *one*; the Caledonia *three* long guns, when she had but *two*, &c. &c. It is a fact which would seem to have been generally known to the American squadron, that the *third* gun of the Caledonia, a 32lb. *carronade*, was dismounted by its recoil, and fell into the hatchway. Capt. Mackenzie's account of the British metal, the writer entertains no doubt, is materially inaccurate also, while he will not insist that the one he gives himself, from Capt. Barclay, is rigidly correct.

Detroit, Capt. Barclay, 19 guns; 2 long 24s, 1 long 18 on pivot, 6 long 12s, 8 long 9s, 1 24lb. carronade, 1 18lb. do.

Queen Charlotte, Capt. Finnis, 17 guns; 1 long 12 on pivot, 2 long 9s, 14 24lb. carronades.

Lady Prevost, Lieut. Buchan, 13 guns; 1 long 9 on pivot, 2 long 6s, 10 12lb. carronades.

Hunter, Lieut. Bignall, 10 guns; 4 long 6s, 2 long 4s, 2 long 2s, 2 12lb. carronades.

Little Belt, 3 guns; 1 long 12 on pivot, 2 long 6s.

Chippewa, Mr. Campbell, 1 long 9 on pivot.

Total number of guns, 63.

On the morning of the 10th September, the British squadron was seen in the offing, and the American vessels got under way, and went out to meet it. The wind, at first, was unfavorable, but so determined was Perry to engage, that he decided to give the enemy the weather-gage, a very important advantage with the armament he possessed, should it become necessary. A shift of wind, however, brought him out into the lake to windward, and left him every prospect of engaging in a manner more desirable to himself.

The enemy had hove-to, on the larboard tack, in a compact line ahead, with the wind at south-east. This brought his vessels' heads nearly, or quite, as high as S. S. West. He had placed the Chippewa in his van, with the Detroit, Barclay's own vessel, next to her. Then followed the Hunter, Queen Charlotte, Lady Prevost, and Little Belt, in the manner named. Perry had issued his order of battle some time previously, but finding that the enemy did not form his line as he had anticipated, he determined to make a corresponding change in his own plan. Originally, it had been intended that the Niagara should lead the American line, in the expectation that the Queen Charlotte would lead



that of the English ; but finding the Detroit ahead of the latter vessel, it became necessary to place the Lawrence ahead of the Niagara, in order to bring the two commanding vessels fairly along side of each other. As there was an essential difference of force between the two English ships, the Detroit being a vessel at least a fourth larger and every way heavier than the Queen Charlotte, this prompt decision to stick to his own chosen adversary is strongly indicative of the chivalry of Perry's character, for many an officer would not have thought this accidental change on the part of his enemy a sufficient reason for changing his own order of battle on the eve of engaging. Calling the leading vessels near him, however, and learning from Capt. Brevoort, of the army, and late of the brig Adams, who was then serving on board the Niagara as a marine officer, the names of the different British vessels, Capt. Perry communicated his orders for the Lawrence and Niagara to change places in the contemplated line, a departure from his former plan which would bring him more fairly abreast of the Detroit.

At this moment, the Lawrence, Niagara, Caledonia, Ariel and Scorpion were all up, and near each other, but the Trippe, Tigress, Somers and Porcupine were still a considerable distance astern. All of the last named craft but the Porcupine had been merchant vessels, purchased into the service and strengthened ; alterations that were necessary to enable them to bear their metal, but which were not likely to improve whatever sailing qualities they might possess.

It was now past ten, and the leading vessels manœuvred to get into their stations, in obedience to the

orders just received. This brought the Scorpion a short distance ahead, and to windward of the Lawrence, and the Ariel a little more on that brig's weather bow, but in advance. Then came the Lawrence herself, leading the main line, the two schooners just mentioned being directed to keep to windward of her; the Caledonia, the Niagara, the Tigress, the Somers, the Porcupine and the Trippe. The prescribed distance that was to be maintained between the different vessels was half a cable's length.

The Americans were now astern and to windward of their enemies, the latter still lying gallantly with their topsails aback, in waiting for them to come down. Perry brought the wind abeam, in the Lawrence, and edged away for a position abreast of the Detroit, the Caledonia and Niagara following in their stations. The two schooners ahead were also well placed, though the Ariel appears to have soon got more on the Lawrence's beam than the order of battle had directed. All these vessels, however, were in as good order as circumstances allowed, and Perry determined to close, without waiting for the four gun-vessels astern to come up.

The wind had been light and variable throughout the early part of the morning, and it still continued light, though sufficiently steady. It is stated to have been about a two-knot breeze when the American van bore up to engage. As they must have been fully two miles from the enemy at this time, it, of course, would have required an hour to have brought them up fairly along side of the British vessels, most of the way under fire. The Lawrence was yet a long distance from the

English when the Detroit threw a twenty-four pound shot at her. When this gun was fired, the weight of the direct testimony that has appeared in the case, and the attendant circumstances, would show that the interval between the heads of the two lines was nearer two than one mile. Perry now showed his signal to engage, as the vessels came up, each against her designated opponent, in the prescribed order of battle. The object of this signal was to direct the different commanders to engage as soon as they could do so with effect; to preserve their stations in the line; and to direct their fire at such particular vessels of the British as had been pointed out to them severally in previous orders. Soon after an order was passed astern, by trumpet, for the different vessels to close up to the prescribed distance of half a cable's length from each other. This was the last order that Perry issued that day from the Lawrence to any vessel of the fleet, his own brig excepted. It was intended principally for the schooners in the rear, most of which were still a considerable distance astern. The Caledonia and Niagara were accurately in their stations, and at long gun-shot from the enemy. A deliberate fire now opened on the part of the enemy, which was returned from the long gun of the Scorpion, and soon after from the long guns of the other leading American vessels, though not with much apparent effect on either side. The first gun is stated to have been fired at a quarter before twelve. About noon, finding that the Lawrence was beginning to suffer, Perry ordered her carronades to be tried, but it was found that the brig was still too distant for the shot to tell. He now set his top-gallant-

sail and edged away more for the enemy, suffering considerably from the fire of the long guns of the *Detroit* in particular.

The *Caledonia*, the *Lawrence's* second astern, was a prize brig, that had been built for burden, rather than for sailing, having originally been in the employment of the Northwest Company. Although her gallant commander, Lieut. Turner, pressed down with her as fast as he could, the *Lawrence* reached ahead of her some distance, and consequently became the principal object of the British fire; which she was, as yet, unable to return with more than her two long twelves; the larboard bow gun having been shifted over for that purpose. The *Scorpion*, *Ariel*, *Caledonia* and *Niagara*, however, were now firing with their long guns, also, carronades being still next to useless. The latter brig, though under short canvas, was kept in her station astern of the *Caledonia*, only by watching her sails, occasionally bracing her main-topsail sharp aback, in order to prevent running into her second ahead. As the incidents of this battle have led to a painful and protracted controversy, which no biographical notice of Perry can altogether overlook, it may be well to add, here, that the facts just stated are proved by testimony that has never been questioned, and that they appear to us to relate to the only circumstance in the management of the *Niagara*, on the 10th of September, that is at all worthy of the consideration of an intelligent critic. At the proper moment, this circumstance shall receive our comments.

It will be remembered that each of the American vessels had received an order to direct her fire at a particular

adversary in the British line. This was done to prevent confusion, and was the more necessary, as the Americans had nine vessels to the enemy's six. On the other hand, the English, waiting the attack, had to take such opponents as offered. In consequence of these orders, the Niagara, which brig had also shifted over a long twelve, directed the fire of her two chase-guns at the Queen Charlotte, and the Caledonia engaged the Hunter, the vessel pointed out to her for that purpose; leaving the Lawrence, supported by the Ariel and Scorpion, to sustain the cannonading of the Detroit, supported by the Chippewa, as well as to bear the available fire of all the vessels in the stern of the English line, as, in leading down, she passed ahead to her station abreast of her proper adversary. Making a comparison of the aggregate batteries of the five vessels thus engaged at long shot, or before carronades were fully available, we get on the part of the Americans, one 24 and six 12s, or seven guns in all, to oppose to one 24, one 18, three 12s, and five 9 pounders, all long guns. This is estimating all the known available long guns of the Ariel, Scorpion and Lawrence, and the batteries of the Chippewa and the Detroit, as given by Capt. Barclay, in his published official letter, which, as respects these vessels, is probably minutely accurate; though it is proper to add that an American officer, who subsequently had good opportunities for knowing the fact, thinks that the Chippewa's gun was a 12 pounder. Although the disparity between 7 and 10 guns is material, as is the difference between 96 and 123lbs. of metal, they do not seem sufficient to account for the great disparity of the injury that was sustained by the Lawrence, more espe-

cially in the commencement of the action. We are left, then, to look for the explanation in some additional causes.

It is known that one of the *Ariel's* 12s burst early in the day. This would at once bring the comparison of the guns and metal, as between the five leading vessels, down to 6 to 10 of the first, and 84 to 123 of the last. But we have seen that both the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* shifted each a larboard bow-gun over to the starboard side, a course that almost any commander would be likely to adopt under the circumstances of the action. It is not probable that the *Detroit*, commencing her fire at so great a distance, with the certainty that it must be some time before her enemy could get within reach of his short guns, neglected to bring her most available pieces into battery also. Admitting this to have been done, there would be a very different result in the figures. The *Detroit* fought ten guns in broadside, and she had an armament that would permit her to bring to bear on the *Lawrence*, at one time, two 24s, one 18, six 12s and one 9 pounder. This would leave the comparison between the guns as 6 are to 11, and between the metal as 84 are to 147. Nor is this all. The *Hunter* lay close to the *Detroit*, and as the vessel which assailed her was still at long shot, it is probable that she also brought the heaviest of her guns into broadside, and used them against the nearest vessel; more particularly as her guns were light, and would be much the most useful in such a mode of firing.

But other circumstances conspired to sacrifice the *Lawrence*. Finding that he was suffering heavily, and that he had got nearly abreast of the *Detroit*, Perry

furled his topgallant-sail, hauled up his fore-sail, and rounded to, opening with his carronades. The distance from the enemy at which this was done, as well as the length of time after the commencement of the fire, have given rise to contradictory statements. The distance, Perry himself, in his official letter, says was "within canister-shot," a term too vague to give any accurate notion that can be used in a critical analysis of the facts of the engagement. A canister-shot, thrown from a heavy gun, would probably kill at a mile; though seamen are not apt to apply the term to so great a range. Still they use all such phrases as "yard-arm and yard-arm," "musket-shot," "canister-shot," and "pistol-shot," very vaguely; one applying a term to a distance twice as great as would be understood by another. The distance from the English line, at which the Lawrence backed her topsail, has been placed by some as far as half a mile, and by others as near as 300 yards. It was probably between the two, nearer to the last than to the first; though the brig, as she became crippled aloft, and so long as there was any wind, must have been slowly drifting nearer to her enemies.

On the supposition that there was a two-knot breeze the whole time, that the action commenced when the Lawrence was a mile and a half from the enemy, and that she went within a quarter of a mile of the British line, she could not have backed her topsail until after she had been under fire considerably more than a half an hour. This was a period quite sufficient to cause her to suffer heavily, under the peculiar circumstances of the case.

'The effect' of a cannonade is always to deaden, or

even "to kill," as it is technically termed by seamen, a light wind. Counteracting forces neutralize each other, and the constant explosions from guns repel the currents of the atmosphere. This difficulty came to increase the critical nature of the Lawrence's situation, the wind falling to something very near, if not absolutely to a flat calm. This fact, which is material to a right understanding of the events of the day, is unanswerably shown in the following manner.

The fact that the gun-boats had been kept astern by the lightness of the wind, is mentioned by Perry, himself, in his official account of the battle. He also says, "at half past two, the wind springing up, Capt. Elliott was enabled to bring his vessel, the Niagara, gallantly into close action," leaving the unavoidable inference that a want of wind prevailed at an earlier period of the engagement. Several officers testify that it fell nearly calm, while no one denies it. One officer says it became "perfectly calm," and others go near to substantiate the statement. There is a physical fact, however, that disposes of this point more satisfactorily than can ever be done by the power of memories or the value of opinions. Both Perry and his sailing-master say that the Lawrence was perfectly unmanageable for a considerable time. This period, a rigid construction of Perry's language would make two hours; and by the most liberal that can be given to that of the master, must have been considerably more than one hour. It is physically impossible that an unmanageable vessel, with her sails loose, should not drift half a mile, in an hour, had there been only a two-knot breeze. The want of this drift, which would have carried the Lawrence



directly down into the English line, had it existed, effectually shows, then, that there must have been a considerable period of the action in which there was little or no wind, and corroborates the direct testimony that has been given on this point.\*

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\* In the battle of Plattsburg Bay, which took place the succeeding year, the wind was so light and baffling, that the British anchored before they got as close as they had intended to go. Still, one of their vessels, the Chubb, was crippled, and she drifted into the American line, in the first half hour of the engagement. The distance this vessel actually drifted, under such circumstances, was about as far as that at which Perry engaged the enemy, proving that the latter must also have drifted an equal distance, after he was disabled, had there been any wind. The Chubb, too, was a fore-and-aft vessel, a species of craft that would not have the drift of a square-rigged brig, as her sails would be, and probably were, lowered; nor would they hold as much wind. It is true that the English on Lake Erie were not anchored, as was the case with the Americans on Lake Champlain; but a vessel hove-to in smooth water, would not have half the drift of one that was all abroad, and the difference, as a principle, would be only one of time. If the Chubb drifted a quarter of a mile in half an hour, the Lawrence should have drifted twice that distance in twice that time. She should have drifted farther, being of light draught of water, and having the most top-hamper. Again. The drift of a vessel in the situation of the Lawrence would have been *astern* and to leeward, while that of vessels hove-to would have been *ahead* and to leeward. On the supposition that there was any wind, these last facts would effectually have prevented the Lawrence from remaining abeam of her enemies two whole hours, as is admitted to have been the case. In our former edition we did not advert to the circumstance of McDonough's being anchored, simply because we believed, with Marshall, that "a Chief Justice of the United States might be presumed to know something." We never intended to say that Perry would have reached the English line as soon as the Chubb reached the American, but that he must have reached it during the battle; meaning the *rear* of that line. The Chubb was probably in the American line within ten minutes after

Previously, however, to its falling calm, or nearly so, and about the time the Lawrence backed her topsail, a change occurred in the British line. The Queen Charlotte had an armament of three long guns, the heaviest of which is stated by Capt. Barclay to have been a 12 pounder, on a pivot, and fourteen 24lb. carronades. The latter guns were shorter than common, and, of course, were useless when the ordinary American 32lb. guns of this class could not be served. For some reason, which has not been quite satisfactorily explained, this ship shifted her berth, after the engagement had lasted some time, filling her topsail, passing the Hunter, and closing with the Detroit, under her lee. Shortly after, however, she regained the line, directly astern of the commanding British vessel. The enemy's line being in very compact order, and the distance but

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she became unmanageable, having been in our possession within the first half hour of the battle.

Capt. Pring, in his official account of this battle, excuses his not cutting the brig Linnet's cable, after the Confiance had struck, and endeavoring to escape, on the ground that his vessel was crippled, and that had he done so she would have drifted directly into the American line. "The result of doing so, (cutting the cable,)—must," he says, "in a few minutes, have been her drifting alongside of the enemy's vessels close under our lee." The distance was about two cables' length, or 480 yards; 440 yards being a quarter of a mile. Those who believe that Perry engaged the enemy at a less distance than this, increase the probability of his drifting into the British line, had there been any wind. The fact that he did *not*, is conclusive on the subject of the wind. It should also be remembered that Perry, in saying that the Lawrence was disabled, does not in the least speak *figuratively*, but *literally*. His words are, "*every brace and bowline being shot away*, she became unmanageable, *notwithstanding the great exertions of the sailing-master.*" A square-rigged vessel, *without a brace or bowline*, is perfectly unmanageable, as a matter of course.

trifling, the Queen Charlotte was enabled to effect this in a few minutes, there still being a little wind. The Detroit probably drew ahead to enable her to regain a proper position.

This evolution on the part of the Queen Charlotte has been differently accounted for. At the time it was made the Niagara was engaging her sufficiently near to do execution with her long twelves, and, at the moment, it was the opinion on board that brig, that she had driven her opponent out of the line. As the Queen Charlotte opened on the Lawrence with her carronades, as soon as she got into her new position, a more plausible motive was that she had shifted her berth, in order to bring her short guns into efficient use. The letter of Capt. Barclay, however, gives a more probable solution to this manœuvre, than either of the foregoing conjectures. He says that Capt. Finnis, of the Queen Charlotte, was killed soon after the commencement of the action, and that her first lieutenant was shortly after struck senseless by a splinter. These two casualties threw the command of the vessel on a provincial officer of the name of Irvine. This part of Capt. Barclay's letter is not English, and has doubtless been altered a little in printing. Enough remains, however, to show, that he attaches to the loss of the two officers mentioned, serious consequences; and in a connection that alludes to this change of position, since he speaks of the prospect of its leaving him the Niagara also to engage. From the fact that the Queen Charlotte first went under the lee of the Detroit, so close as to induce the Americans to think she was foul of the quarter of that ship, a position into which she never would have been carried

had the motive been merely to get nearer to the Lawrence, or farther from the Niagara, we infer that the provincial officer, finding himself unexpectedly in his novel situation, went so near to the Detroit to report his casualties and to ask for orders, and that he regained the line in obedience to instructions from Capt. Barclay in person.

Whatever was the motive for changing the Queen Charlotte's position in the British line, the effect on the Lawrence was the same. Her fire was added to that of the Detroit, which ship appeared to direct all her guns at the leading American brig, alone. Indeed, there was a period in this part of the action, during which most, if not all of the guns of the Detroit, the Queen Charlotte, and Hunter, were aimed at this one vessel. Perry appears to have been of opinion that it was a premeditated plan, on the part of the enemy, to destroy the commanding American vessel. It is true, that the Ariel, Scorpion, Caledonia and Niagara, from a few minutes after the commencement of the action, were firing at the English ships, but that the latter disregarded them, in the main, would appear from the little loss the three small American vessels sustained, in particular. The Caledonia and Niagara, moreover, were still too distant to render their assistance of much effect. About this time, however, the gun-boats astern got near enough to use their heavy guns, though most of them were yet a long way off. The Somers would seem to have engaged a short time before the others.

At length, Capt. Elliott finding himself kept astern by the bad sailing of the Caledonia, and his own brig so near as again to be under the necessity of bracing

her topsail aback, to prevent going into her, determined to assume the responsibility of changing the line of battle, and to pass the Caledonia. He accordingly hailed the latter, and directed that brig to put her helm up and let the Niagara pass ahead. As this order was obeyed, the Niagara filled and drew slowly head, continuing to approach the Lawrence as fast as the air would allow. This change did not take place, however, until the Lawrence had suffered so heavily as to render her substantially a beaten ship.

The evidence that has been given on the details is so contradictory and confused, as to render it exceedingly difficult to say whether the comparative calm of which we have spoken occurred before or after this change in the relative positions of the Lawrence and Caledonia. Some wind there must have been, at this time, or the Niagara could not have passed. As the wind had been light and baffling most of the day, it is even probable that there may have been intervals in it, to reconcile in some measure these apparent contradictions, and which will explain the inconsistencies. After the Niagara had passed her second ahead, to do which she had made sail, she continued to approach the Lawrence in a greater or less degree of movement, as there may have been more or less wind, until she had got near enough to the heavier vessels of the enemy to open on them with her carronades; always keeping in the Lawrence's wake. The Caledonia, having pivot guns, and being now nearly or quite abeam of the Hunter, the vessel she had been directed to engage, kept off more, and was slowly drawing nearer to the enemy's line. The gun-vessels astern were closing, too,

though not in any order, using their sweeps, and throwing the shot of their long heavy guns, principally 32 pounders, quite to the head of the British line; beginning to tell effectually in the combat.

As the wind was so light, and the movements of all the vessels had been so slow, much time was consumed in these several changes. The Lawrence had now been under fire more than two hours, and, being almost the sole aim of the headmost English ships, she was dismantled. Her decks were covered with killed and wounded, and every gun but one in her starboard battery was dismantled, either by shot or its own recoil. At this moment, or at about half-past two, agreeably to Perry's official letter, the wind sprang up and produced a general change among the vessels. One of its first effects was to set the Lawrence, perfectly unmanageable as she was, astern and to leeward, or to cause her to drop, as it has been described by Capt. Barclay, while the enemy appear to have filled, and to commence drawing ahead. The Lady Prevost, which had been in the rear of the British line, passed to leeward and ahead, under the published plea of having had her rudder injured, but probably suffering from the heavy metal of the American gun-vessels as they came nearer. An intention existed on the part of Capt. Barclay to get his vessels round, in order to bring fresh broadsides to bear. The larboard battery of the Detroit by this time was nearly useless, many of the guns having lost even their trucks, and, as usually happens in a long cannonade, the pieces that had been used were getting to be unserviceable, from one cause or another.

At this moment the Niagara passed the Lawrence

to windward, and then kept off toward the head of the enemy's line, which was slowly drawing more toward the Southward and Westward. In order to do this, she set topgallant-sails and brought the wind abaft the beam. The *Caledonia* also followed the enemy, passing inside the *Lawrence*, having got nearer to the enemy, at that moment, than any other American vessel. As soon as Perry perceived that his own brig was dropping, and that the battle was passing ahead of him, he got into a boat, taking with him a young brother, a midshipman of the *Lawrence*, and pulled after the *Niagara*, then a short distance ahead of him. When he reached the latter brig, he found her from three to five hundred yards to windward of the principal force of the enemy, and nearly abreast of the *Detroit*, that ship, the *Queen Charlotte* and the *Lady Prevost* being now quite near each other, and probably two cables' length to the Southward and Westward; or that distance nearly ahead of the *Lawrence*, and about as far from the enemy's line as the latter brig had been lying for the last hour.

Perry now had a few words of explanation with Capt. Elliott, when the latter officer volunteered to go in the boat, and bring down the gun-vessels, which were still astern, and a good deal scattered. As this was doing precisely what Perry wished, Capt. Elliott proceeded on his duty immediately, leaving his own brig, to which he did not return until after the engagement had terminated. Perry now backed the main-top-sail of the *Niagara*, being fairly abeam of his enemy, and showed the signal for close action. After waiting a few minutes for the different vessels to answer and to

close, the latter of which they were now doing fast as the wind continued to increase, he bore up, bringing the wind on the starboard quarter of the Niagara, and stood down upon the enemy, passing directly through his line. Capt. Barclay, with a view of getting his fresh broadsides to bear, was in the act of attempting to ware, as the Niagara approached, but his vessel being much crippled aloft, and the Queen Charlotte being badly handled, the latter ship got foul of the Detroit, on her starboard quarter. At this critical instant, the Niagara had passed the commanding British vessel's bow, and coming to the wind on the starboard tack, lay raking the two ships of the enemy, at close quarters, and with fatal effect. By this time, the gun-vessels, under Capt. Elliott, had closed to windward of the enemy, the Caledonia in company, and the raking cross-fire soon compelled the English to haul down their colors. The Detroit, Queen Charlotte, Lady Prevost and Hunter struck under this fire, being in the *mélée* of vessels; but the Chippewa and Little Belt made sail and endeavored to escape to leeward. They were followed by the Scorpion and Trippe, which vessels came up with them in about an hour, and firing a shot or two into them, they both submitted. The Lawrence had struck her flag also, soon after Perry quitted her.

Such, in its outline, appears to have been the picture presented by a battle that has given rise to more controversy than all the other naval combats of the republic united. We are quite aware that by rejecting all the testimony that has been given on one side of the disputed points, and by exaggerating and mutilating that



which has been given on the other, a different representation might be made of some of the incidents ; but, on comparing one portion of the evidence with another, selecting in all instances that which in the nature of things should be best, and bringing the whole within the laws of physics and probabilities, we believe that no other result, in the main, can be reached, than the one which has been given. To return more particularly to our subject.

Perry had manifested the best spirit, and the most indomitable resolution not to be overcome, throughout the trying scenes of this eventful day. Just before the action commenced, he coolly prepared his public letters, to be thrown overboard in the event of misfortune, glanced his eyes over those which he had received from his wife, and then tore them. He appeared fully sensible of the magnitude of the stake which was at issue, remarking to one of his officers, who possessed his confidence, that this day was the most important of his life. In a word, it was not possible for a commander to go into action in a better frame of mind, and his conduct in this particular might well serve for an example to all who find themselves similarly circumstanced. The possibility of defeat appears not to have been lost sight of, but it in no degree impaired the determination to contend for victory. The situation of the *Lawrence* was most critical, the slaughter on board her being terrible, and yet no man read discouragement in his countenance. The survivors all unite in saying that he did not manifest even the anxiety he must have felt at the ominous appearance of things. The *Lawrence* was effectually a beaten ship an hour before she

struck; but Perry felt the vast importance of keeping the colors of the commanding vessel flying to the last moment; and the instant an opportunity presented itself to redeem the seemingly waning fortunes of the day, he seized it with promptitude, carrying off the victory not only in triumph, but apparently against all the accidents and chances which, for a time, menaced him with defeat.

Perry appears seriously to have satisfied himself that he captured a materially superior force in the battle of Lake Erie. If any reliance is to be placed on the published report of Capt. Barclay, this is certainly an error; and, we may add, that the better opinion of those naval men who have had proper opportunities for ascertaining the fact, is also against it. In the men of the two squadrons, there was probably no essential disparity; although there are reasons for thinking that the English a little outnumbered the Americans. Neither side had many above or under five hundred souls engaged in this action. But the sick lists of the Americans amounted to more than a hundred. As Capt. Barclay came out expressly to fight, expecting to meet his enemy the next day, and he had received aboard his vessels a strong party of troops, it is not probable he brought out any sick with him. It is in confirmation of this opinion, that, while the enemy dwell on their inferiority of force, and the other disadvantages under which they supposed themselves to labor, nothing is said of any sick. This fact would make a material difference as respects the men, even allowing the opposing parties to have been equal, numerically.

In vessels the Americans were to the English as nine are to six. This might have been a disadvantage, however, and in one sense it was, by distributing the force unequally at the commencement of the battle. Still, as the two largest American brigs were essentially heavier than the two heaviest British vessels, and the *Ariel* was a schooner of some size, this circumstance would have been more than balanced by their weight, could these three vessels have got into close action simultaneously, and soon; or before the enemy had an opportunity to cripple one of them in detail.

The opinion of Perry, and, we may add, that of the country, concerning the superiority of the enemy in this battle, appear to have been founded principally on the circumstance that the English had the most guns. A mere numerical superiority in guns is altogether fallacious. A single long 32 pounder, for most of the purposes of nautical warfare, would be more efficient than thirty-two 1 pounders; the sizes of the guns being quite as important as the number. There can be little question that a vessel, always supposing her to be of a size suitable to bear the metal, which carried twenty 32 pounders, would be fully a match for two similar ships that carried each twenty 12 pounders; or, perhaps, for two that carried each twenty 18 pounders; the guns being long or short alike. As the latter, however, was not the fact in the battle of Lake Erie, the *Detroit* carrying long guns, principally, while the two heaviest American brigs carried carronades, the comparative estimates of force become complicated in a way that does not altogether refer to weight of shot. The superiority of the long gun depends, first, on its

greater range, and the greater momentum of the shot, pound for pound; second, from the circumstance that the long ship-gun will almost always bear two, and sometimes three shot; whereas the carronade is in danger of dismounting itself by the recoil, if over-charged, and of so far lessening the momentum of its shot as to prevent them from penetrating a vessel's side;\* and, thirdly, because the long gun will sustain a protracted cannonade, while a short gun is seldom of much efficiency after an hour's service. There can be no question that the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* would have been an overmatch for the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*

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\* In this battle the *Detroit's* side was full of shot that did not penetrate. By some it was supposed that the American powder was bad; but, it is far more probable that the distance at which the *Lawrence* engaged at first, and over-shotting her carronades, were the true reasons the English escaped so well for the first hour or two. This fact is now asserted, on direct testimony. Mr. Dobbins, an officer of experience who served on the Lake, but who was not in this battle, having joined the squadron from distant service, a day or two after its occurrence, writes as follows:—  
“A day or two after the action I was on board the *Detroit*, and in company with Lieut. Rolette of the British service, and late of that ship, with whom I was well acquainted previous to the war, and shown by him the division he had charge of, and had from him an explanation and account of the action. There was one thing he remarked, which I have never seen mentioned in any account of that affair. He said that the ship (the *Detroit*) received more damage in her hull from the long guns, more particularly the long 32s of the gun-boats, than from all the rest put together; and that the carronades, particularly of the *Lawrence*, must have been much over-shotted, as the shot from them would frequently strike the side of the ship, and rebound into the water. In fact, I was told by some of those who were on board of her, (*Lawrence*), that they invariably put in, first, a round shot, and then a stand of both grape and canister, and sometimes a bag of language besides.’

in close action, and when we come to see the great disparity of the metal of the remaining vessels, it can leave no doubt that the Americans possessed the strongest force on this occasion, comparing the two squadrons in the aggregate. A very brief analysis will prove the justice of this position.

The American vessels, in the battle of Lake Erie, carried 54 guns, while the English had 63. This makes a numerical superiority of 9 guns, and on this vague fallacy the victory has been assumed to have been one of an inferior over a superior force. In the combat between the *Constellation* and *l'Insurgente*, the latter vessel mounted 40 guns, and the former only 38. There was also a difference of a hundred men, in favor of the French ship. But the *Constellation's* gun-deck metal was long 24s, while that of *l'Insurgente* was French 12s; leaving the former an essential superiority of force that no intelligent seaman has ever denied. In the action we are examining, the *Hunter* mounted 10 guns, and the *Caledonia* 3. Thus, numerically speaking, the former vessel was of more than treble the force of the latter. But a critical analysis of the metal, and of the armaments, will give a very different result. In the first place, the *Caledonia's* guns were on pivots, which gave her 3 guns in broadside, whereas the *Hunter* could fight but 5 at any one time, and under any circumstances. This fact alone reduces the numerical superiority of the British vessel from more than treble to less than double. Then comes the consideration of the metal. Agreeably to Capt. Barclay's return of the force of his vessels, which is appended to his official account of the battle, the regular broadside

metal of the Hunter was only 30 lbs., and this, too, distributed in shot, of which some were so small as 2, 4, and 6lbs. each; while the Caledonia threw 80lbs. of metal at a discharge, in 24 and 32lb. shot. On the other hand, however, the Hunter had quarters, or bulwarks, which make a protection against small missiles.

There is another circumstance to prove the fallacy of placing the superiority of force on a naked numerical superiority in guns. Including the pivot guns, and the regular armament of the British on the 10th September, they fought 34 guns at a time, or what may be termed in broadside; while the Americans, owing to their having more traversing pieces mounted, fought precisely the same number, though of much heavier metal. This fact at once reduces the apparent comparative force of the two squadrons in guns, or from that of 54 to 63, to a numerical equality; or, to that of 34 to 34.

But the fortunes of a battle are not to be estimated solely by the physical forces employed by the opposing parties. Circumstances constantly occur to neutralize these advantages, and to render the chances nearer equal. The assailant has frequently more to contend with than the assailed, and it is obvious that the force which cannot be used is, for the purposes of that particular occasion, as if it did not exist. While, therefore, there can be little doubt that the American squadron, in the battle on Lake Erie, was much superior to the British squadron as a whole, there were circumstances to aid the enemy which produced far more of a real than there was of an apparent equality. As respects Perry, himself, he certainly, in his own brig, contended against

a vastly superior force, owing to the dispersed state of his vessels, in part, though quite as much, probably, to the determination of the enemy to concentrate their fire on the American commanding vessel until they had destroyed her. The latter circumstance will account for many of the seeming anomalies of this day. Thus the *Ariel* and *Scorpion*, though engaged from the first, suffered comparatively but little ; as did the *Caledonia*. All these vessels were under fire from an early period in the action, and it is in direct proof that a shot passed through the wails of both sides of the latter vessel, within a short time after the battle commenced.

The slaughter on board the *Lawrence* was terrible. Mr. Yarnall, her first lieutenant, testified before a Court of Inquiry, in 1815, that the *Lawrence* had on board of her "131 men and boys of every description, of which 103 were fit for duty." Of this number 22 were killed, and 63 were wounded. The loss of the *Niagara*, also, would have been deemed heavy but for this carnage on board the *Lawrence*. By the report of Perry, himself, she had 2 killed and 25 wounded. Her own surgeon, however, says that this report was inaccurate, the slightly wounded having been omitted. He also says that there were five men killed. The discrepancy is to be accounted for by the circumstances that after the action, the men were much scattered in the prizes, the *Niagara* furnishing most of their crews, and that her own medical officer had no agency in drawing up the report. Thus the number of the dangerously and severely wounded the latter states to have been accurately given, while those of the slain and slightly wounded were not. These are facts which it is diffi-

cult to authenticate, at this late day; though there are circumstances which go to render the accuracy of this correction of the official report probable, if not certain. In a squadron which now numbered fifteen sail, with broken crews, few officers to report, and some of those few wounded or ill, and with men dying of disease daily, mistakes of this nature might readily occur. The other vessels did not suffer heavily, and the British, as a whole, lost about as many men as the Americans.

While the nation was disposed to overlook every thing connected with this battle, in the result, Perry did not escape criticism for the manner in which he engaged the enemy. It was said that he ought to have waited until his line had become compact, and covered the approach of his two principal brigs, by the fire of the heavy long guns of the smaller vessels. This is probably still the opinion of many distinguished seamen.

It is certain that by placing the schooners of the American squadron in the advance, it would have been possible to open on the enemy with as many long guns as he possessed himself, and guns of much heavier metal; but grave questions of this nature are not to be so lightly determined, as this admission may seem to infer. There was the experience of the warfare on Lake Ontario to induce Perry to suppose that a similar policy might be resorted to on Lake Erie. The English sailed better in squadron than the Americans, on both lakes, and having the same object in view, the commander on Lake Erie had every reason to suppose that they would retire before him, as



soon as a general action became probable, and thus postpone, or altogether avoid the desired conflict for the command of those waters. The distances being so small, nothing was easier than to carry out this policy. Even allowing Perry to have sent his heavily armed schooners in advance, and to have approached himself under cover of their fire, there can scarcely be a doubt that Barclay would have wore round, and changed the order of formation, by bringing them, again, into the rear of the American line; an evolution that would have been easy of accomplishment, with his superiority of sailing.

Had the wind stood, or even had not the enemy hit upon the plan of directing most of their fire against the *Lawrence*, the victory of Lake Erie, now so complete in its results, would have had no drawbacks. But, with the high ends he kept in view, the importance of securing the command of the lake, and the moral certainty of success could he close with his enemy, Perry would scarcely have been justified in delaying the attack, on the plea that the lightness of the wind endangered any particular vessel of his command. Now that the battle is over, it is doubtless easy to perceive in what manner it might have been better fought, but this is a remark that will probably apply to all human actions.

His victory at once raised Perry from comparative obscurity to a high degree of renown before the nation. With the navy he had always stood well, but neither his rank nor his services had given him an opportunity of becoming known to the world. The important results that attended his success, the completeness of that suc-

cess, the number of vessels captured at the same time, and the novelty of a victory in squadron over the English, all contributed to shed more than an ordinary degree of renown on this event; and, by necessary connection, on the youthful conqueror of that day. His own great personal exertions, too, gave a romantic character to his success, and disposed the public mind to regard it with an unusual degree of interest. The government granted gold medals to Perry and his second in command, and the former was promoted to be a captain, his commission being dated on the 10th September, 1813.

His triumph on the water did not satisfy Perry. After co-operating with the army, by assisting in regaining possession of Detroit, and in transporting the troops, he joined the land forces, under General Harrison, in person, and was present at the Battle of the Moravian Towns. In all this service, he was as active as his peculiar situation would allow, and there can be little doubt that the presence of a gallant young sailor, flushed with victory and ever foremost on the march, was cheering to the army which then pressed on the rear of the enemy. After the surrender of the British troops, Perry issued, conjointly with Harrison, a proclamation to the people of the portion of Upper Canada that had fallen into the hands of the republic, pointing out the usual conditions for their government and submission. It is worthy of remark that this was the first instance in which any American naval officer was ever in a situation to perform a similar act.

Shortly after, the end of the season being at hand, Perry gave up his command. As he returned to the

older parts of the country, his journey was a species of triumph, in which warm, spontaneous feeling, however, rather than studied exhibition predominated.

Perry's victory did not prove altogether barren, in another sense, though his pecuniary benefits were certainly out of proportion small, as compared with the political benefits it conferred on the country. There was properly no broad pennant on Lake Erie, in either squadron, Com. Chauncey, in the one case, and Sir James Yeo, in the other, being the commander-in-chief. This circumstance deprived Perry of the usual share of prize money which legally fell to that rank, but Congress added the sum of \$5000 to that of \$7500 which belonged to him as commander of the *Lawrence*, making a total amount of \$12,500; a sum which, while it is insignificant when viewed as the gift of a nation, bestowed on a conqueror for such a service, was not altogether unimportant to the young housekeeper, whose family had now been increased in number to four by the birth of two children. It may be added, here, as a proof of the high estimation in which Perry's success has ever been held by the nation, that his most elaborate biographer states that something like forty counties, towns, villages, etc., have been named after him, in different parts of the Union.

Perry had returned to his command and his family at Newport, on quitting Lake Erie, but here it was not possible for him to remain long, in the height of an active war. In August, 1814, he was transferred to the *Java* 44, an entirely new ship, then fitting at Baltimore. This vessel, however, was unable to get out, in consequence of the force the enemy kept in the bay, below.

Her commander and crew were actively employed in the operations that were carried on to annoy the British vessels on their descent of the Potomac from Alexandria, and the defence of their own vessel was confided to them in the fruitless attempt on Baltimore.

About the close of the year, preparations were made for equipping two light squadrons, with a view to harass the trade of the enemy. One of the squadrons was now given to Perry, it being found that the *Java* could not get to sea. He immediately caused the keels of three brigs to be laid, intending to have two more constructed to complete the number. Peace, however, put an end to this enterprise.

In May, 1815, Perry was attached anew to the *Java*, and he remained in this ship, at different ports, until January, 1816, when he sailed from Newport for the Mediterranean. While lying at the port from which he now took his departure, an opportunity offered for this brave man, always active on emergencies of this sort, to rescue the crew of a wreck from drowning, during a gale in the cold weather of an American winter. The season was boisterous, and it is mentioned as an extraordinary fact that the *Java*, which sailed from Newport with strong north-west gales, passed the Western Islands, the eighth day out. On the fourteenth she was within a few hours' run of Cape St. Vincent.

On reaching the Mediterranean, the *Java* joined a squadron commanded by Com. Shaw, and was present before Algiers at a moment when very serious movements were contemplated against that regency. Peace, however, was preserved, and the ship continued to cruise in that beautiful sea, subsequently under the

command of Com. Chauncey, until January, 1817, when she was ordered home.

The termination of this cruise was made uncomfortable to Perry, by an exceedingly unpleasant misunderstanding with the commanding marine-officer of his own ship. Some disagreeable occurrences had already created a coolness between them, when Perry, in a personal interview, became so far irritated as to strike his subordinate in his own cabin. It may be some little extenuation of this act, that it is understood to have been committed after Perry had returned from a dinner party on shore. There is little to be said in justification of such a violation of propriety, beyond the usual plea that no one is always right. Perry appears to have been soon sensible that he had committed himself in a way to require concessions, and these he very handsomely offered to make. They were not accepted, and the affair subsequently led to recriminating charges and trials, by means of which both the offenders were sentenced to be privately reprimanded.

This transaction produced a deeper feeling, perhaps, than any other question of mere discipline that ever agitated the American marine. It was justly said that, in Perry's case, the punishment was altogether disproportioned to the offence, and that the persons and honor of the subordinates were placed at the mercy of the captains by the decision. There can be no sufficient reason for the commanding officer of a ship's using violence toward an inferior, as he has all legal means for compelling legal submission; and beyond this his power does not extend. Thus the punishment of the superior who thus transcends his just authority ought

even to exceed that which awaits the subordinate who rebels against it, since it is without a motive in itself, while passion may goad the other to an act of madness; and, of the two, it is ever more dangerous to discipline for the superior than for the inferior to err. In the one case, the crime is that of an individual; while in the other, it is authority itself which is in fault; and power can never offend without bringing discredit on its attributes.

As respects the conduct of Perry in this matter, it partakes equally of what we conceive to be the strong and the weak points of his character. Notwithstanding all that rigorous moralists may be disposed to say, the best excuse for the offence, perhaps, is the fact that he was a little off his guard by the exhilaration of the scene he is understood to have just left. The fault committed, apology was his true course, and this reflection induced him to offer. It was not accepted, and he saw before him the prospect of a trial. Then it was that he preferred the charges against the marine officer. Here he committed, by far, the gravest of his faults; and truth compels us to say it was a fault that he committed more than once in the course of his life, leaving, under the gravity of the cases, reason to infer that it was connected with some controlling trait of character. A commander has little discretion in the preferring of charges. If the party merit punishment, or if the act demand investigation, the public good is the object, in both cases alike. Under no circumstances can a commander, with propriety, compromise or vindicate justice, on grounds that are purely personal to himself. If the marine officer, in this case, merited punishment, the charges

should not have been delayed, but have been instituted independently of all questions between him and his commander; and did he not merit it, they should not have been preferred, even though Perry's commission were the price of his own error. There will be another occasion to advert to a similar confusion between right and wrong, in the official career of this distinguished officer, and in a case affecting himself.

On the other hand, Perry showed a deep sense of the error he had committed in connection with this affair, in his subsequent conduct. After his return home, a meeting took place between him and the marine officer, in which he received the shot of his opponent, declining to fire in return. Nothing could have been better than his conduct throughout the latter part of this affair. In a letter written to his friend Decatur, on this occasion, he uses the following generous and manly language—"I cannot return his fire, as the meeting, on my part, will be entirely an atonement for the violated rules of the service."

The affair with his marine officer was not quite disposed of, when a new difficulty arose to embitter the close of Perry's life. Like that of the marine officer, it has already attracted too much notice, and the indiscretions of ill-judging and partial vindicators have dragged into the question principles of far too much importance to the navy, and indeed to the nation at large, to allow of any biographer's passing it over in silence.

The battle of Lake Erie was attended by two circumstances that were likely to entail dissensions and discussions on the actors in that important event.

Though victory crowned the efforts of the Americans, the commanding vessel, the *Lawrence*, struck her flag to the enemy, while the *Niagara*, a vessel every way her equal in force, did not get her full share of the combat until near its close. Nothing is more certain than that both these peculiarities might have occurred without blame being properly attached to any one; but nothing was more natural than that such circumstances should lead to accusations, recriminations, and quarrels. Most of the officers were exceedingly young men, and, while some of the *Niagara* were indiscreet in accusing those who surrendered the *Lawrence* of having tarnished the lustre of the day, those of the *Lawrence* retorted by accusing the *Niagara* of not having properly supported them. When this business of recrimination commenced, or which party was the aggressor, it would now most probably be in vain to ask; but the result has been one of the most protracted and bitter controversies that has ever darkened the pages of the history of the American marine; and a controversy to which political malignancy has endeavored to add its sting. As full and elaborate discussions of this subject have appeared, or will appear in print, we intend to allude to it here no farther than it is inseparably connected with the acts and character of the subject of our memoir, and the vindication of our own opinions.

In his official account of the battle of Lake Erie, Perry commended the conduct of his second in command, Capt. Elliott, in terms of strong eulogium. But it would seem that the circumstances above mentioned gave rise to some early rumors to the prejudice of both parties; it being contended, on one side, that Capt. El-



liott did not do his duty in the engagement, and, on the other, that Capt. Perry came on board the Niagara dispirited, and ready to abandon the day. The country heard but little of this, though the report to the prejudice of Capt. Elliott was widely circulated in the region of the lakes, particularly among the troops of Gen. Harrison's army. In 1815, in consequence of a paragraph in an English newspaper, which accompanied the finding of the Court Martial that sat on Capt. Barclay, and which appears to have been mistaken even by Capt. Elliott, as well as by sundry writers of this country, for a part of the finding itself, Capt. Elliott asked for a Court of Inquiry into his conduct on the 10th Sept. The court sat; and the finding was an honorable acquittal. Here the matter rested for three years, or until after the return of Perry from the Mediterranean, when he received a letter from Capt. Elliott, who asked for explanations on the matter of certain certificates enclosed, which alleged that he, Capt. Perry, had spoken disrespectfully of his, Capt. Elliott's, conduct in the battle of Lake Erie. This letter produced a brief but envenomed correspondence, in which Perry avowed the imputations charged to him, and which terminated in a challenge from Capt. Elliott. This challenge Perry declined accepting, on the ground that he was about to prefer charges against his late subordinate. Here the matter terminated, in waiting for the future course of the government. It is known that these charges were shortly after sent, but no proceedings were ever ordered by the department.

In order to form a just estimate of Perry's conduct in this affair, and to discharge our own duties as im-

partial biographers, it will be necessary to analyze his charges, and to give him the benefit of his own explanations. Perry felt the awkwardness of his present position. In 1813, a few days after the battle, he had written a letter to the secretary, eulogizing the conduct of Capt. Elliott in unequivocal terms. This letter was written three days after the occurrence of the events, when all the circumstances were still quite recent, and yet when sufficient time had been given to become acquainted with any incidents which may have escaped his personal observation. He was now, five years later, bringing accusations which necessarily involved a contradiction of his eulogiums, and he felt the necessity of offering his reasons for this change of course and seemingly of opinion. This he did in a letter that was sent with his charges, and which was dated August 10th, 1818.

In his explanations, Perry took the ground that when he wrote the official letter of 1813, commending the conduct of Capt. Elliott, he was not fully apprised of all the facts of the case; but that he now possessed the evidence necessary to substantiate his charges. This was the only substantial excuse that could be offered, the profession of a reluctance to say any thing which might injure Capt. Elliott, which was also urged, hardly sufficing to explain away a eulogy. The truth, however, compels us to go further, and to add that Perry, in this instance, committed the same fault that he had just before fallen into in the case of the marine officer. He allowed considerations that were purely personal to himself, to control his official conduct. In his explanations, it is distinctly stated that he should

still have been willing to pass over the alleged delinquency of Capt. Elliott, had not the latter, by assailing his, Perry's, character, endeavored to repair his own. While he makes this admission, Perry also confesses that the facts upon which some of his present charges were founded had long been in his possession, thus weakening his best defence for the course he was now taking, or that of previous ignorance. If we add that Perry gave as an additional reason for praising Capt. Elliott in his official report of the battle, that he wished all under his orders to share in the glory of the day, the excuse is not tenable, as he omitted altogether to mention four of his commanders, and this, too, under circumstances that produced deep mortification to the gentlemen whose names were not given to the nation.

A dispassionate examination of this letter, at once exposes its fallacies. In the first place, it was not necessary to eulogize the conduct of Capt. Elliott to screen him from censure. The praise that Perry gave him, in 1813, is prominent, distinct, and much fuller than that which is bestowed on any other officer under his command. It is but justice to Perry to say, however, that admitting Capt. Elliott deserved equally well with others, his rank, and the peculiar circumstance that he alone was Perry's equal in this respect, might fairly entitle him to more notice than his inferiors; while it is due to Capt. Elliott to add that superiority of notice was by no means necessary if the object had been solely to protect from censure. There is a particularity in Perry's praise, however, that it is difficult to ascribe to any thing but an honest conviction that Elliott

merited it. That the reader may judge for himself, we give parts of the letter itself, in a note, putting the passages that apply especially to Capt. Elliott in italics.\*

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\* The following passages from Perry's official report, are those in which he speaks of the conduct of Capt. Elliott, and in which he speaks of the conduct of his officers generally. They are all given for the purposes of comparison.

"U. S. Schooner *Ariel*, Put-in-Bay, 13th Sept. 1813.

"SIR—In my last I informed you that we had captured the enemy's fleet on this lake. I have now the honor to give you the most important particulars of the action," &c.

"At half-past two, the wind springing up, *Capt. Elliott was enabled to bring his vessel, the Niagara, gallantly into close action; I immediately went on board of her, when he anticipated my wish, by volunteering to bring the schooners, which had been kept astern by the lightness of the wind, into close action.*"

"The Niagara being very little injured, I determined to pass through the enemy's line—bore up and passed ahead of their two ships and a brig, giving a raking fire to them with the starboard guns, and to a large schooner and sloop from the larboard side, at half pistol-shot distance. The smaller vessels at this time having got within grape and canister distance, *under the direction of Capt. Elliott, and keeping up a well-directed fire*, the two ships, a brig, and a schooner surrendered, a schooner and sloop making a vain attempt to escape."

"Those officers and men under my observation evinced the greatest gallantry, and I have no doubt that all others conducted themselves as became American officers and seamen. Lieut. Yarnall, first of the *Lawrence*, though several times wounded, refused to quit the deck. Midshipman Forrest, (doing duty as lieutenant,) and sailing-master Taylor, were of great assistance to me. I have great pain in stating to you the death of Lieut. Brooks of the marines, and Mid. Lamb, both of the *Lawrence*; and Mid. John Clark, of the *Scorpion*—they were valuable officers. Mr. Hambleton, purser, two volunteered his services on deck, was

The next consideration is the circumstance that Perry forbore to prefer his charges, though some of the proofs had long been in his possession, until an issue had been made up between his own character and that of Capt. Elliott. This, then, is the instance similar to that which occurred in the affair of the marine officer. In both cases, the prosecutor is in possession of the facts; in both he delays to bring his charges while a controversy affecting himself is in suspense; and in both he actually brings them when he finds that his own conduct is to be brought in question. All this is proved by Perry's own showing, and there is little necessity of dilating on the merits of his course. It is unjustifiable, and the mitigation of its errors is only to be sought in the universal predominance of human

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severely wounded late in the action. Mid. Swartout and Claxton, of the Lawrence, were severely wounded. On board the Niagara, Lieuts. Smith and Edwards, and Mid. Webster (doing duty as sailing-master) behaved in a very handsome manner. Capt. Brevoort, of the army, who acted as a volunteer in the capacity of a marine officer on board that vessel, is an excellent and brave officer, and with his musketry did great execution. Lieut. Turner, commanding the Caledonia, brought that vessel into action in the most able manner, and is an officer that in all situations may be relied upon. The Ariel, Lieut. Packett, and Scorpion, Sailing-Master Champlin, were enabled to get early into the action, and were of great service. Capt. Elliott speaks in the highest terms of Mr. Magrath, purser, who had been despatched in a boat on service, previous to my getting on board the Niagara; and, being a seaman, since the action has rendered essential service in taking charge of one of the prizes. *Of Capt. Elliott, already so well known to the government, it would be almost superfluous to speak. In this action he evinced his characteristic bravery and judgment, and since the close of the action has given me the most able and essential assistance."*

infirmity. It must be allowed, perhaps, that a large majority of mankind would have acted under similar influence, and have made the same mistake ; but, at the same time, it is certain there are a few who would not. It follows, therefore, that the character of Perry, as respects the qualities connected with this affair, must be classed with those of the men who suffer personal feeling to control their public conduct, instead of with those of the men who, in their public acts, overlook self, and decide solely on the abstract principles of duty. This is said without adverting more particularly to the issue which it is alleged had been made up between Perry and Elliott, since nothing is plainer than the fact, that accusations against the former might easily have been disproved, if false, without necessarily dragging accusations against the latter into the inquiry. The result of all is to show, that while Perry possessed some of the qualities of true greatness, he wanted others, without which no man can claim to be placed near the summit of human morals.

It must also be conceded that Perry did not manifest the strong desire he supposes, to allow all to share in the honors of the day, since, as has just been stated, he omitted to mention the names of no less than four of the commanders of his gun-vessels ; two of whom were superior in rank to others who were expressly named, and all of whom were as much entitled to be mentioned as the commanders of the other small vessels, under the usual considerations of naval etiquette. We come now to an examination of the charges themselves.

The charges brought by Capt. Perry against Capt. Elliott, in 1818, may be divided into two classes :

those which refer to the conduct of the latter on the 10th Sept., 1813, and those which refer to his conduct subsequently to that day. As the last have no connection with any historical event, they may be passed without comment, though it is no more than justice to Perry to say that some of these charges, with their specifications, are of a nature, if true, to require the punishment of the offender; while it is equally justice to Capt. Elliott to say that others, on their face, are frivolous, and, in their nature, not to be legally sustained. Of the latter class, is a specification which charges Capt. Elliott with having "declared, that the officers and men of the *Lawrence* were not entitled to prize-money on account of the vessels of the enemy captured on Lake Erie, but that the officers and crews of the other vessels of the American fleet were entitled to prize-money for the re-capture of the *Lawrence*." To deny an officer the right to make declarations of this nature, would be virtually to deny him the right of maintaining his private interests in the forms prescribed by law. This particular specification appears to have been conceived in a spirit that appeals to the national vanity, rather than to the national justice.\*

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\* In another specification, Perry charges Elliott with having said that the British vessels might, from the superior force of the Americans, have been taken in fifteen minutes, "although he, the said Capt. Elliott, well knew that the force of the enemy in that engagement was superior to that of the American fleet."

The writer cannot see on what principle of force the English, comparing fleet to fleet, were superior to the Americans. An experienced officer, who examined both squadrons, tells him that the Americans were decidedly superior. Officers who were in

The charges of ill conduct on the part of Capt. Elliott, in the battle of Lake Erie, are three in number. The first is conceived in the following words, viz.:—"That the said Capt. Elliott, on the 10th Sept., 1813, being then a master and commander in the navy of the United States, and commanding the U. S. brig Niagara, one of the American squadron on Lake Erie, did not use his utmost exertions to carry into execution the orders of his commanding officer to join in the battle of that day between the American and British fleets." There are two other charges, one accusing Capt. Elliott of not doing his utmost to destroy the vessel he had been particularly ordered to engage, and the other that he did not do his utmost to succor the Lawrence. All three of these charges substantially rest on the same specifications, there being but one elaborately prepared, which assumes to give an outline of the movements of the Niagara in the action.

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the engagement have given him the same account of the matter. His own calculations produce a similar result. Mr. Webster, before the Court of Inquiry, in 1815, says:—"In close action they were not superior to us, in my opinion; but from the *lightness of the wind, the situation of the fleets, and the enemy's having long guns, I consider them superior.*"

Capt. Turner, in his affidavit, says that it was owing to the Niagara's being so far astern, or, to use his own words, "which circumstance, only, made the result of the battle for a short time doubtful." This is strong language to use *as against a superior force.*

Mr. Packett also says, substantially, the same thing. Now, neither of these brave men would be apt to think success against a superior *British force certain.*

The charge against Elliott is extraordinary in every point of view, since it is like compelling an officer to submit his opinions to those of other persons, in a matter affecting his views of force.



As the purpose of this article is merely to draw a sketch of Perry's acts and character, it is unnecessary to comment on these charges further than is required to effect that object. We deem it impossible for any impartial person to read these charges, and then to examine the evidence, without coming to the conclusion that the subject of this memoir lost sight of public duty in the pursuit of private resentment. He appears to have even overlooked the effect of his own orders in the desire to criminate, and it is certain that one of the specifications involves so great an ignorance of some of the plainest principles of nautical practice, as to raise a suspicion that the hand of some legal man has been employed to pervert that which depends so palpably on natural laws as to admit of no serious dispute. There is other evidence, we think, that Perry did not draw up these charges himself; a fact that may, in a measure, relieve him from the responsibility of having brought them in the precise forms in which they appear.

In the specification of charge fourth, we get the following statement, as coming from Perry himself, touching his own order of battle, viz.: "1st. An order directing in what manner the line of battle should be formed: the several vessels to keep within half a cable's length of each other, and *enjoining it upon the commanders to preserve their stations in the line*, and in all cases to keep as near to the commanding officer's vessel (the Lawrence) as possible. 2d. An order of attack: in which order the Lawrence was designated to attack the enemy's new ship, (afterward ascertained to be named the Detroit,) and the Niagara, commanded by the said Capt. Elliott, designated to attack the enemy's ship Queen

Charlotte," &c., &c. This, then, was the general order of battle, as respects the Niagara, with the addition that her station in the line was half a cable's length astern of the Caledonia. Perry also gave a repetition of Nelson's well known order—"That if his officers laid their vessels close alongside of their enemies, they could not be out of the way." Under these orders, not only Perry himself, in 1818, but several of his witnesses, appear to think it was the duty of a commander to close with the particular adversary he was ordered to engage, if in his power, without regard to any other consideration. This opinion is such an unmilitary construction of the orders, and might have led to consequences so injurious, as to be easily shown to be untenable.

If the construction of the orders just mentioned can be sustained, the line, the distance from each other at which the vessels were to form, and every other provision for the battle, the one alluded to excepted, became worse than useless. The true course would have been, with such an intention before a commander, to have directed the several officers to their respective antagonists, and left them to find their way alongside in the best manner they could. If such were intended to be the primary order, in the orders for battle, it should have been so worded as to let the subordinates understand it, and not fetter them with other orders, of which the execution must materially interfere with the execution of this particular mandate.

But it is impossible to understand the order of battle in this restricted sense; else would it reflect sorely on Perry's judgment as an officer, and do utter discredit to

his powers of explanation. The order of battle clearly meant—first, to prescribe a *line of battle*, in which each ship had her assigned station, with an additional direction, “*enjoining it on her to keep her station in the line ;*” second, to point out at what vessel of the enemy each American should direct his efforts, *from that station in the line ;* and, lastly, if circumstances deranged the original plan, to keep near the Lawrence, though you may place yourself alongside of your enemy as a last resort; *there* you cannot be much out of your way. Without this construction of them, the orders would be a contradictory mass of confusion.

Now it is in proof that the Niagara was in her station astern of the Caledonia, until Capt. Elliott, after waiting for orders to shift his berth in vain, did it on his own responsibility, breaking that line of battle which he was enjoined to keep, and from the responsibility of doing which it was certainly the peculiar duty of Perry to relieve him, either by a signal, or by an order sent by a boat, did it appear to him to be necessary. It is also in proof, that, when Capt. Elliott took on himself, in the immediate presence of his commander, without a signal, to break an order of battle he was enjoined to keep, he endeavored to close with the Lawrence, and that when the latter dropped, he passed ahead, and came abeam of the only heavy vessels the enemy possessed, engaging them within musket-shot. If these facts are not true, human testimony is worthless ; for they are substantially shown even by the best of Capt. Perry’s own witnesses. This confusion in the reading of the orders prevails among most of the witnesses, who evidently mistake the accessory for the principal.

Another of Perry's specifications accuses Capt. Elliott of keeping his brig "nearly a mile's distance from the Lawrence," &c., at the period of the engagement before he passed the Caledonia. It is beyond dispute that the Caledonia was close to the Niagara all this time, and, let the distance be what it might, it is not easy to find the principle which censures one commander, under these circumstances, and does not censure the other; unless the explanation is to be found in the admitted superiority of the Niagara over the Caledonia in sailing. This we believe to be the solution of Perry's impression on this particular point, as well as of those of the witnesses whose affidavits accompany his charges. In other words, they appear to have persuaded themselves that it was the duty of Capt. Elliott to have disregarded the line of battle, and the injunction to keep it, and to have broken it immediately, or as soon as the Lawrence drew ahead of the Caledonia. This is what is meant by their statement that the wind which carried the Lawrence ahead, would have done the same thing with the Niagara. No one can dispute the fact; but the question, who ought to take the responsibility of altering a line of battle before any material damage had been done on either side, he who issued the order originally, and who had the power to change his own arrangements, or he whose duty it was to obey, is a question which can admit of no dispute in the minds of the clear-thinking and impartial.

Having adverted to this particular specification, it is proper to add that all the witnesses of the Niagara, who speak to the point, differ from the charges as to this alleged distance of their vessel when astern; and even

the two lieutenants of the *Lawrence*, who were examined before the court of 1815, put it, the one at three quarters of a mile from *the enemy*, and the other at from half to three quarters of a mile ; thus lessening the distance averred in the charges, by nearly, if not quite, one half.

In another specification Perry uses these words, viz. : "Instead of preventing which, or affording any assistance to said brig *Lawrence*, the said Capt. Elliott left that vessel, her officers and crew, (eighty-three of whom were killed or wounded,) a sacrifice to the enemy, although his, the said Capt. Elliott's, vessel remained perfectly uninjured, with not more than one or two of his men, (if any,) while Capt. Elliott continued on board of her, wounded.

Since the death of Perry, the clearest evidence has been produced to show that the *Niagara* had met with at least half of her whole loss before Perry reached her, and several witnesses have testified they do not think more than five or six of the casualties occurred while he was on board. Previously to his bringing the charges, however, the error of this allegation about the wounded, and that of the injuries to the vessel, had been publicly shown. Mr. Webster, the sailing-master of the *Niagara*, before the court of 1815, testified that he was hurt and carried below previously to Capt. Perry's coming on board ; and, in reply to a question as to the injuries received by the *Niagara*, he answered as follows, viz. : "There were two men killed from my division *before I went below*, and several men wounded on board." This testimony forms part of the records of the department, though Perry may never have seen it. To

suppose him capable of bringing an allegation that only two men were *wounded* in the Niagara, when it was established that two had been *killed*, would be to attribute to him a subterfuge that could scarcely be palliated by the blindness of resentment. There is now no doubt, whatever, that the specification, so far as it relates to the hurt of the Niagara, rests solely on vague rumors, which, so far from strengthening the accusations against Capt. Elliott, have a direct tendency to weaken them, by proving the active feeling under which they have been brought. The specification, worthless as it would be if true, is unquestionably untrue.

There is another specification which it is impossible to suppose Perry deliberately offered, and not to imagine him totally blinded by resentment, since it involves a physical contradiction. This specification is in these words: "And was (meaning Capt. Elliott) when his said commanding officer went on board that vessel, (the Niagara,) keeping her on a course *by the wind*, which would in a few minutes have carried said vessel entirely out of action; to prevent which, and in order to bring said vessel into close action with the enemy, the said commanding officer was under the necessity of heaving-to, and immediately waring said vessel, and altering her course *at least eight points*."

The first objection to this charge is a feature of disingenuousness, that has greatly misled the public mind, on the subject of the situation the Niagara actually occupied when Capt. Perry reached her. It is unanswerably in proof that this brig was about as near to the enemy as the Lawrence ever got during the engagement, and though Perry certainly carried her much

nearer, the phrase he uses, in this charge, of "in order to bring the said vessel into close action," has a tendency to mislead. If the Lawrence was ever in close action, then was the Niagara in close action when Perry reached her; and it would have been fairer to have used some expression which would have left a clearer idea of the real facts of the case. But this is the least objection to the specification. A reference to Capt. Perry's own official report of the action will show that he himself admits, in that document, that *Capt. Elliott took the Niagara into close action.*

If Capt. Perry found the Niagara "on a course by the wind," he found her steering on a line parallel to that on which the enemy was sailing; and if it required "a few minutes" to carry her out of action, under such circumstances, it is a proof she was still coming up abreast of her antagonist; and to insinuate that that was an equivocal position, would be like insinuating the same of Hull, when he ran alongside of the Guerriere, or of Lawrence when he did the same to the Shannon, as each of these officers was steering on courses off the wind, which in a few minutes would have carried them ahead of their foes, and out of the action, had they not devised means to prevent it. To accuse a man of what might happen, while he is still doing what is right, is to bring a charge which falls of its own weight. It is an accusation which may be brought against the most virtuous while employed in the performance of any act of merit.

Feeble as is the imputation contained in the foregoing feature of this specification, that which follows is still more so, since it contradicts the possibilities. Pass-

ing over the singularity of a ship's first heaving-to, to prevent her running out of action, and of then "immediately waring," a conjunction of evolutions that is entirely novel to seamanship, we come to the charge that Capt. Perry was obliged to "ware" or alter his course "eight points," in order to cut the English line. The term "ware" is never used by a seaman unless he brings the wind from one quarter to the other. To "ware" is to come round *before* the wind; as to "tack" is to come round *against* the wind. With the wind at north, a ship on the larboard tack that was steering "a course by the wind" would head at least as high as east-north-east. Now keeping her off "eight points," would cause her to head south-south-east; a course which would not only still leave the wind on her larboard quarter, but which would want two full points of keeping dead away; the last being a step preliminary to waring, or coming up on the other tack. If Capt. Perry used the term "waring" inadvertently, and merely meant to say that he *kept away* eight points to cut the line, it follows that the Niagara must have been nearly abeam of the enemy when he took command of her, and proves that Capt. Elliott himself was fairly coming up alongside of his enemy. If, however, he is to be understood as saying literally that he did "ware," or bring the wind on his starboard quarter, as is most probably true, both because the fact is believed to be so, and because a seaman would not be apt to use the word "ware" without meaning the thing, it gives a death-blow to the only serious imputation connected with the charge, by showing that Capt. Elliott must have been bearing down on the enemy



when Capt. Perry reached the Niagara. The very minimum of waring would be to bring the wind one point on the quarter opposite to that on which it had been before the evolution was performed. Less than that would be keeping away. No seaman would think of using the term for a change less than this. Now, if Capt. Perry "wore," and altered his course only eight points, he must have had the wind one point abaft the beam when he commenced the evolution, and the charge that Capt. Elliott was hugging the wind cannot be true.

It is impossible to refute this reasoning, which depends on the simplest mathematical demonstration. The weakness of the specification is so apparent, indeed, as to give reason to distrust the agency of any seaman in its immediate production. There are some incidental facts that may possibly strengthen such a supposition. The answer of Perry to Capt. Elliott's last letter, is dated August 3d, 1818. In this answer, he says—"I have prepared the charges I am about to prefer against you; and, by the mail to-morrow, shall transmit them to the Secretary of the Navy," &c. The date of the charges actually sent to the department, however, is August 8th, or five days later, and, from the phraseology of the charges, as well as from that of the accompanying affidavits, it gives some reason to suppose that an outline of the facts had, in the interval, been laid before some member of the bar, who has himself supplied the phraseology, and with it, quite likely, most of the defective reasoning.

It is nevertheless impossible to read this page in the life of Perry without regret. The self-contradiction be-

tween the language of his official report and that of his charges is of a character that every right-thinking man must condemn, and when we take his own explanations of the discrepancy, and look into the charges themselves, we find little to persuade us that the last were brought under that high sense of the convictions of public duty, which alone could justify his course. We have no pleasure in laying this matter before the world, but the circulation which has lately been given to the subject, under *ex parte* views and mutilated testimony, imposes the obligation on a biographer to dwell longer on this theme than he might wish. There is ever a temptation in a democracy to flatter even the prejudices of the community; but he is, indeed, a short-sighted judge of human nature who fancies that the world will fail to punish those who have been the instruments of even its own delusions, and a miserable moralist who sees truth through the medium of popular clamor, at the expense equally of his reason and of the right.

The government never ordered any proceedings on the charges thus preferred by Perry against Capt. Elliott. It appears to have viewed them, as they must be viewed by all impartial men who examine the subject, as the result of personal resentment, confessedly offered to its consideration under the influence of personal interests; and as something very like the assumption of a right in a public servant to mould the history of the country to suit the passions or policy of the hour. Still, Perry remained a favorite, for his services were unequivocal, and there was a desire to overlook the capital mistake into which he had fallen. We have no evidence of his pressing the matter, and it

is fair to presume, from this circumstance, that the advice of cool-headed friends prevailed on him to acquiesce in the course taken by the functionaries at Washington.

It was March, 1819, before Perry was again called into service. He had caused a small residence to be constructed on a part of the property that had been in his family since the settlement of the country, and here he passed the autumn of the year of his controversies; certainly well clear of one of them, whatever may be the judgment of posterity concerning his course in the other. The following winter he purchased a house in Newport, and took possession of his new abode. Here he was found by letters from the department directing him to join the Secretary in New York. The result of the interview was his being ordered to the command of a force that was to be employed in protecting the trade with the countries near the equator, his functions being semi-diplomatic as well as nautical.

It was intended that Perry, who now in truth first became a commodore by orders, though the courtesy of the nation had bestowed on him the title ever since his success on Lake Erie, should hoist his broad pennant on board the *Constellation* 38; but that ship not being ready, he sailed from Annapolis in the *John Adams* 24, on the 7th June. He did not get to sea, however, until the 11th. Early in July the *John Adams* reached Barbadoes. After communicating with the shore, she proceeded on to the mouth of the Orinoco, where Perry shifted his pennant to the *Nonsuch* schooner, which vessel had sailed in his company, and sent the ship to Trinidad. He then began to ascend the river toward

Angostura, the capital of Venezuela; off which town the *Nonsuch* anchored on the evening of the 26th July.

The American party remained at Angostura until the 15th August; twenty days, at nearly the worst season of the year. The yellow fever prevailed, and Perry remarks in his journal, a few days after his arrival, that his crew was getting to be sickly, and that two Englishmen had already been buried from the house in which he resided. After transacting his business, it now became necessary to depart, and, on the day above mentioned, he took his leave of the authorities, and immediately got under way.

The situation of the *Nonsuch* was already critical, her commander, the late commodore, then Lieut. Claxton, the present Capt. Salter, who was a passenger, and Doctor Morgan, the surgeon, together with some fifteen or twenty of the crew, being already down with the fever. The whole service had been one of danger, though it was a danger that does not address itself to the imagination of men with the influence and brilliancy of that of war. The officers and crew of this vessel had entered the Orinoco, only thirty-four days after they sailed from Lynn Haven, and were probably as much exposed to the dreadful disease of the equator as men well could be. As yet, however, the deaths in the schooner had not been numerous, about one fourth of the ill only having died.

On the morning of the 17th, Perry entered his gig, and, as the *Nonsuch* continued to drop down with the current, he pulled ahead, amusing himself with a fowling-piece along the margin of the river. This may seem to have been running an unnecessary risk, but

the seeds of disease were doubtless already in his system. That evening, the vessel reached the mouth of the stream, but meeting with a fresh and foul wind, she was anchored on the bar. There was a good deal of sea in the course of the night, which was driven in before the breeze, and the schooner riding to the current, the spray washed over her quarter, from time to time, water descending into the cabin and wetting Perry in his sleep. When he awoke, which was quite early, he found himself in a cold chill. In about an hour the chill left him, and was succeeded by pains in the head and bones, a hot skin, and other symptoms of yellow fever. Perry was of a full habit of body, and to appearances as unpromising a subject for this disease as might be. He had foreseen the risk he ran, and had foretold his own fate in the event of being seized. Notwithstanding his appearance, it seems he would not bear the lancet, the loss of blood causing him to sink, and his attendants were compelled to relinquish a treatment that had been quite successful in most of the other cases. There were intervals of hope, however, his skin cooling, and his breathing becoming easier, but new accesses of the disorder as constantly succeeded to destroy their cheering influence.

From the first, Perry himself had but little expectation of recovery. His fortitude was not the less apparent, though he frequently betrayed the strength of the domestic ties which bound him to life. By the 23d of August, the *Nonsuch* had got within two leagues of her haven, being bound to Port Spain, in Trinidad, where his own ship, the *John Adams*, was waiting his return. Perry was now so far gone as to have attacks of the

hiccough, though his mind still remained calm and his deportment placid. He was lying on the floor of a trunk-cabin, in a small schooner, under a burning sun, and in light winds; a situation that scarcely admitted of even the transient comfort of cooling breezes and complete ventilation. At noon of this day he desired the surgeon to let him know if any fatal symptoms occurred, and shortly after he was actually seized with the vomiting which in this disorder is the unerring precursor of death. This was a sign he could understand as well as another, and he summoned to his side several of his senior officers, and made a verbal disposition of his property in favor of his wife. He appears to have waited to perform this act until quite assured that his fate was certain. This duty discharged, he asked to be left alone.

A boat from the John Adams now arrived, and there was a moment of reviving interest in the world as he inquired of her first lieutenant as to the situation of his ship and crew. He then had an interview with the gentleman whom he wished to draw his will, but his mind wandered, and about half-past three he breathed his last. As his death occurred on the 23d of August, 1819, he was just thirty-four years and two days old when he expired. When this event occurred, the *Non-such* was only a mile from the anchorage, and it would have been a great mitigation of such a blow, could the dying man have passed the last few hours of his existence in the comfortable and airy cabin of a larger vessel. The death of the commodore was first announced to the officers and crew of the John Adams by seeing the broad pennant, the symbol of authority, lowered from

the mast-head of the schooner. The body was interred with military honors in Trinidad, but, a few years later, it was transferred in a ship of war to Newport, where it now lies, in its native soil, and in the bosom of the community in which it first had an existence.

In person, Com. Perry was singularly favored, being, in early manhood, of an unusually agreeable and prepossessing appearance. The expression of his countenance was open, frank and cheerful, indicating more of the qualities of the heart, perhaps, than of the mind. His capacity was good, notwithstanding, if not brilliant or profound, and he had bestowed sufficient pains on himself to render his conversation and correspondence suited to the high rank and trust that were confided to him. He was warm-hearted, affectionate in disposition, gentle in his ordinary deportment, but quick in temper, and, as usually happens with men of vivid feelings, as apt to dislike as strongly as he was cordial in his attachments. He was inclined to a clannish feeling, as is apt to be the case with the members of small communities, and more or less of its effects are to be traced in several incidents of his life. Thus, in the controversy that occurred between himself and Capt. Elliott, of the nine witnesses who take a view of the latter officer's conduct similar to his own, six were gentlemen who followed him from Rhode Island,\* and belonged to

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\* Of the other three, two were the lieutenants of the *Lawrence*, and had their feelings enlisted in the fate of that brig, while the ninth was an officer who not only had just before quarreled with Capt. Elliott, but who, by his own showing, believed that the omission of his own name in the despatches was owing to Capt. Elliott's interference. No better proof of the nature of the feeling that prevailed need be given than the fact, that the surgeon's mate

his own gallant little state. He was fond of surrounding himself with friends from his native place, and ever retired to it when not on service afloat. Perry was probably the only officer of his rank who never served an hour, unattached to a vessel in any state but his own. Whether this were accidental, or the result of choice, we cannot say; but it is in singular conformity with his predilections, which go far toward explaining some of the more painful passages of his life.

In stature, Commodore Perry was slightly above the middle height.\* His frame was compact, muscular, and well formed, and his activity in due proportion. His voice was peculiarly clear and agreeable, and, aided

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of the Lawrence, one of Perry's immediate followers, testifies himself that he questioned the wounded of the Niagara, within thirty-six hours of the battle, in order to ascertain how many were hurt while Capt. Elliott was on board of her, and how many after Perry took command!

\* The writer admits that many of the minor details of this sketch are obtained from the work of Capt. Mackenzie. But here his indebtedness ceases. He writes and thinks for himself in all that is distinctive in the history or character of Perry. In nothing does he agree less with Capt. Mackenzie, than in the opinion of the latter concerning Perry's stature. "The person of Perry," says that gentleman, "was of the *loftiest stature*, and most graceful mould" —p. 242, vol. 2d, Mack. Life of Perry. If Capt. Mackenzie viewed the whole of his subject through the same exaggerated medium, as he certainly has viewed the person of Perry, it is not surprising that others should differ from him in opinion. The writer has stood side by side with Perry, often, and feels certain he was himself taller than Perry. His own stature was then rather under five feet ten. A gentleman who knew Perry well, assures the writer that he measured him once, for a wager, and that his height was as near as might be to five feet eight. The "*loftiest stature*" would infer, at the very least, six feet, and this Perry certainly was not by several inches.



by its power, he was a brilliant deck-officer. His reputation as a seaman, also, was good, while his steadiness in emergencies was often proved.

By his marriage with Miss Mason, who still lives his widow, Perry left four children; three sons and a daughter. The government made a larger provision than usual for their education and support, though it could scarcely be deemed adequate to its object, or to the claims of the deceased husband and father. Of the sons, the eldest was educated a physician; the second is now a lieutenant in the navy; the third has devoted himself to the profession of arms, as a student at West Point. The daughter is married to a clergyman of the name of Vinton. Perry appears to have been happy in his domestic relations, having been an attached husband and a careful father, though he did not permit the ties of the fireside to interfere with the discharge of his public duties, the severest of all trials perhaps on a man of an affectionate disposition and domestic habits.

In reviewing the life of Com. Perry, one cannot but regret that the ill-directed zeal of mistaken friends has not left his memory peacefully to repose on the laurels he obtained in battle. Advancing under the cover of political vituperation, they have endeavored to sustain a vindictive controversy, by exaggerated pictures of the character of his victory, and by *ex parte* representations of testimony. It is a misfortune that men who have not been capable of appreciating how much more powerful truth really is than even the illusions of national vanity, have had too much to do with what has been termed the vindication of his character, and have thus dragged before the world evidence to prove that Perry

was far from being superior to human failings. His professional career was short, and, though it was distinguished by a victory that led to important results, and which was attended by great success, it was not the victory of unrivaled skill and unsurpassed merit that ill-judged commentators have so strenuously asserted. Compared with the battle of Plattsburgh Bay, as a nautical achievement, the victory of Lake Erie must always rank second in the eyes of American seamen, and, in the eyes of statesmen, as filling the same place in importance. A mere *ad captandum* enumeration of guns can never mislead the intelligent and experienced, and these, when acquainted with the facts, will see that the action of the 10th September was one in which defeat would have been disgrace. Still it was a glorious victory, and gallantly achieved. Circumstances were adverse, and the disadvantages were nobly met by Perry. His greatest merit on this day was in his personal exertions, and the indomitable resolution he manifested not to be conquered. The manner in which he changed his vessel, taken in connection with the motive, *stands almost alone in the annals of naval exploits*, and evinces a professional *game* that of itself would confer lustre on a sea-captain. His recent and severe illness, too, adds to the merit of his conduct, for it is seldom that the mind is enabled to look down the infirmities of the body. But the personal intrepidity of Perry, always of a high order, as was often manifested, was not the principal feature of this act, though it led him from the deck of one ship, already a slaughter-house, that was dropping out of the battle, to the deck of another then in the heat of the combat; but it was that lofty determination to re-

deem his previous losses, and still to wrest victory from the grasp of his enemy, that truly ennobles the deed, and, *so far as he himself was personally concerned, throws the mere calculations of force into the shade.*

The death of Perry, too, has a claim on the public gratitude, that is quite equal to what would have been so readily conceded had he fallen in battle. In his case the fatal danger was not even concealed ; for he went into the Orinoco, as he went into the fight, conscious of the presence of an enemy, and with unerring warnings of his own fate should he happen to come within the reach of his ruthless arm. To our minds, Perry calmly dying on the cabin-floor of the little Nonsuch, surrounded by mourning friends, beneath a burning sky, and without even a breath of the scirocco-like atmosphere to fan his cheek, is a spectacle as sublime as if he lay weltering in his gore on the quarter-deck of the Pennsylvania, with the shouts of victory still ringing in his ears.

The name of Perry will ever remain associated with American naval annals. His victory was the first obtained, in squadron, by the regular and permanent marine of the country, and its reputation precedes all others in the order of time. The peculiar character of his personal exertions associated him more closely with his success, too, than is usual even for a commanding officer, securing to his renown a perpetuity of lustre that no one can envy who justly views his exertions. All attempts to rob Perry of a commander's credit for the battle of Lake Erie must fail ; for to this he is fairly entitled, and this the good sense and natural justice of men must award him ; but too much is exacted when

his admirers ask the world to disregard the known laws that regulate physical force ; to forget the points of the compass ; to overlook testimony, when it is direct, unimpeached, and the best a case will admit of, in favor of rumors that can be traced to no responsible source ; to believe all that even Perry says to-day, and to forget all that he said yesterday ; in short, to place judgment, knowledge, evidence, the truth, and even the laws of nature, at the mercy of imbittered disputants, who have fancied that the ephemeral influence of political clamor is to outlast the eternal principles of right, and even to supplant the mandates of God

## RICHARD DALE.

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AMONG the many brave men who early contributed to render the navy of the republic popular and respectable, the gallant seaman whose name is placed at the head of this article is entitled to a conspicuous place; equally on account of his services, his professional skill, and his personal merit. Although his connection with the marine, created under the constitution of 1789, was of short continuance, it left a durable impression on the service; and, if we look back to the dark period of the Revolution, we find him contending in some of the fiercest combats of the period, always with heroism, and not unfrequently with success. Circumstances, too, have connected his renown with one of the most remarkable naval battles on record; a distinction of itself which fully entitles him to a high place among those who have fought and bled for the independence of their country, in stations of subordinate authority.

Richard Dale was born in the colony of Virginia, on the 6th November, 1756. His birth-place was in the county of Norfolk, and not distant from the well known port of the same name. His parents were native Americans, of respectable standing, though of rather reduced circumstances. His father, dying early, left

a widow with five children, of whom the subject of this memoir was the eldest. Some time after the death of his father, his mother contracted a second marriage with a gentleman of the name of Cooper, among the issue of which were two well known ship-masters of Philadelphia.

Young Dale manifested an inclination for the sea at a very early period of life. The distrust of a parental control that has no foundation in nature, and which is apt to be regarded with jealousy, stimulated if it did not quicken this desire, and we find him at the tender age of twelve, or in 1768, making a voyage between Norfolk and Liverpool, in a vessel commanded by one of his own uncles. On his return home, he appears to have passed nearly a twelvemonth on shore; but his desire to become a sailor still continuing, in the spring of 1770 he was regularly apprenticed to a respectable merchant and ship-owner, of the borough of Norfolk, named Newton. From this moment his fortune in life was cast, and he continued devotedly employed in the profession, until his enterprise, prudence and gallantry enabled him finally to retire with credit, and unblemished name, and a competency.

During his apprenticeship, Dale appears to have been, most of the time, employed in the West India trade. Every sailor has his chances and hair-breadth escapes, and our young mariner met with two, at that period of his life, which may be thought worthy of notice. On one occasion he fell from the spars stowed on the belfry into the vessel's hold, hitting the keelson, a distance of near twenty feet; escaping, however, without material injury. A much greater risk was

incurred on another. While the vessel to which he belonged was running off the wind, with a stiff breeze, Dale was accidentally knocked overboard by the jib sheets, and was not picked up without great difficulty. He was an hour in the water, sustaining himself by swimming, and he ever spoke of the incident as one of more peril than any other in a very perilous career.

When nineteen, or in 1775, Dale had risen to the station of chief mate on board a large brig belonging to his owner. In this situation he appears to have remained, industriously engaged during the few first months of the struggle for independence; the active warfare not having yet extended itself as far south as his part of the country. Early in 1776, however, the aspect of things began to change, and it is probable that the interruption to commerce rendered him the master of his own movements.

Virginia, in common with most of the larger and more maritime colonies, had a sort of marine of its own; more especially anterior to the Declaration of Independence. It consisted principally of bay craft, and was employed in the extensive estuaries and rivers of that commonwealth. On board of one of these light cruisers Dale was entered as a lieutenant, in the early part of the memorable year 1776. While in this service, he was sent a short distance for some guns, in a river craft; but falling in with a tender of the Liverpool frigate, which ship was then cruising on the Cape Henry station, he was captured and carried into Norfolk. These tenders were usually smart little cruisers, another, belonging to the same frigate, having been taken shortly before, by the U. S. brig Lexington, after

a sharp and bloody conflict. Resistance in the case of Dale was consequently out of the question, his capture having been altogether a matter of course.

On reaching Norfolk, our young officer was thrown on board a prison-ship. Here he found himself in the midst of those whom it was the fashion to call "loyal subjects." Many of them were his old school-mates and friends. Among the latter was a young man of the name of Bridges Gutteridge, a sailor like himself, and one who possessed his entire confidence. Mr. Gutteridge, who it is believed subsequently took part with his countrymen himself, was then employed by the British, in the waters of the Chesapeake, actually commanding a tender in their service. The quarrel was still recent; and honorable, as well as honest men, under the opinions which prevailed in that day, might well be divided as to its merits. Mr. Gutteridge had persuaded himself he was pursuing the proper course. Entertaining such opinions, he earnestly set about the attempt of making a convert of his captured friend. The usual arguments, touching the sacred rights of the king—himself merely a legalized usurper, by the way, if any validity is to be given to the claims of hereditary right to the crown—and the desperate nature of the "rebel cause," were freely and strenuously used, until Dale began to waver in his faith. In the end, he yielded and consented to accompany his friend in a cruise against the vessels of the state. This occurred in the month of May, and, hostilities beginning now to be active, the tender soon fell in with a party of Americans, in some pilot boats, that were employed in the Rappahannock. A warm engagement ensued, in



which the tender was compelled to run, after meeting with a heavy loss. It was a rude initiation into the mysteries of war, the fighting being of a desperate, and almost of a personal character. This was one of those combats that often occurred about this period, and in those waters, most of them being close and sanguinary.

In this affair, Dale received a severe wound, having been hit in the head by a musket ball; with this wound he was confined several weeks at Norfolk, during which time he had abundance of leisure to reflect on the false step into which he had been persuaded, and to form certain healthful resolutions for the future. To use his own words, in speaking of this error of his early life, he determined "never again to put himself in the way of the bullets of his own country." This resolution, however, it was necessary to conceal, if he would escape the horrors of a prison-ship, and he "bided his time," fully determined to take service again under the American flag, at the first fitting opportunity.

In the peculiar state of the two countries at the time, and with the doubtful and contested morality of the misunderstanding, there was nothing extraordinary in this incident. Similar circumstances occurred to many men, who, with the best intentions and purest motives, saw, or fancied they saw, reasons for changing sides in what, in their eyes, was strictly a family quarrel. In the case of Dale, however, the feature most worthy of comment was the singleness of mind and simple integrity with which he used to confess his own error, together with the manner in which he finally became a convert to the true political faith. No narrative of the life of this respectable seaman would be complete, with-

out including this temporary wavering of purpose ; nor would any delineation of his character be just, that did not point out the candor and sincerity with which, in after life, he admitted his fault.

Dale was only in his twentieth year when he received this instructive lesson from the "bullets of his countrymen." From that time, he took good care not to place himself again in their way, going, in June or July, to Bermuda, on a more peaceable expedition, in company with William Gutteridge, a relative of his beguiling friend. On the return passage, the vessel was captured by the *Lexington*, the brig just mentioned, then a successful cruiser, under the orders of Capt. John Barry ; an officer who subsequently died at the head of the service. This occurred just after the Declaration of Independence, and Dale immediately offered himself as a volunteer under the national flag. He was received and rated as a midshipman within a few hours of his capture. This was the commencement of Dale's service in the regular navy of his native country. It was also the commencement of his acquaintance with the distinguished commander of the *Lexington*, whose friendship and respect he enjoyed down to the day of the latter's death. While the brig was out, our midshipman had another narrow escape from death, having, together with several others, been struck senseless by lightning during a severe thunder storm.

Barry made the capture just mentioned near the end of his cruise, and he soon after went into Philadelphia, which place Dale now saw for the first time. Here Barry left the *Lexington* to take command of the *Ef-*

ingham 28, a ship that never got to sea, leaving our new midshipman in the brig. Capt. Hallock was Barry's successor, and he soon rated Dale, by this time an active and skilful seaman, a master's mate. Early in the autumn, the Lexington sailed for Cape François, on special duty. On her return, in the month of December, she fell in with the Pearl frigate,\* and was captured without resistance, carrying an armament of only a few fours.

As it was blowing very fresh at the moment this capture was made, the Pearl took out of the prize four or five officers, threw a small crew on board, and directed the brig to follow her. By some accounts Dale was left in the Lexington, while by others he was not. A succinct history of the events of his life, written by a connection under his own eye, and which is now before us, gives the latter version of the affair, and is probably the true one. At all events, the remaining officers and crew of the Lexington rose upon the captors in the course of the night, retook the brig, and carried her into Baltimore.†

The English landed several of their prisoners on Cape Henlopen, in January, 1777, under some arrangement that cannot now be explained, though probably it was connected with an exchange for the men taken and carried away in the prize. Among these was Dale,

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\* This ship has been differently stated to have been the Liverpool and the Pearl. We follow what we think the best authorities.

† The prize-officer of the Lexington was a young American, of a highly respectable family, then an acting lieutenant in the English navy. His prisoners seized an occasion to rise, at a moment when he had gone below for an instant, in consequence of which he was dismissed the service; living the remainder of his life, and dying, in his native country.

who made the best of his way to Philadelphia, when he received orders to proceed to Baltimore; which he obeyed, and rejoined his brig, the command of which had now been transferred to Capt. Henry Johnston.

The next service on which the Lexington was employed was in the European seas. In March, she sailed from Baltimore for Bourdeaux, with despatches. On her arrival, this brig was attached to a small squadron under the orders of Capt. Lambert Wickes, who was in the Reprisal 16, having under his command also the Dolphin 10, Capt. Samuel Nicholson. This force of little vessels accomplished a bold and destructive cruise, making the entire circuit of Ireland, though it was eventually chased into a French port by a line-of-battle ship. Its object was the interception of certain linen-ships, which it missed; its success, however, in the main, was such as to excite great alarm among the English merchants, and to produce warm remonstrances to France, from their government.

At this time France was not at war with England, although she secretly favored and aided the cause of the revolted colonies. The appearance of American cruisers in the narrow seas, however, gave rise to so many complaints, as to induce the French government, in preference to pushing matters to extremities, temporarily to sequester the vessels. The Lexington was included in this measure, having been detained in port more than two months, or until security was given that she would quit the European seas. This was done, and the brig got to sea again on the 18th September, 1777.\*

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\* It is a curious feature of the times, that, the French ordering the Americans to quit their ports with their prizes, the latter were taken out a short distance to sea and sold, Frenchmen becoming the purchasers, and finding means to secure the property.

It is probable that the recent difficulties had some effect on the amount of the military stores on board all three of the American vessels. At all events, it is certain that the Lexington sailed with a short supply of both powder and shot, particularly of the latter. The very next day she made an English cutter lying-to, which was approached with a confidence that could only have proceeded from a mistake as to her character. This cutter proved to be a man-of-war, called the Alert, commanded by Lieutenant, afterward Admiral Bazely, having a strong crew on board, and an armament of ten sixes.

In the action that ensued, and which was particularly well fought on the part of the enemy, the Americans were, in a measure, taken by surprise. So little were the latter prepared for the conflict, that not a match was ready when the engagement commenced, and several broadsides were fired by discharging muskets at the vents of the guns. The firing killed the wind, and there being considerable sea on, the engagement became very protracted, during which the Lexington expended most of her ammunition.

After a cannonading of two hours, believing his antagonist to be too much crippled to follow, and aware of his own inability to continue the action much longer, Capt. Johnson made sail, and left the cutter, under favor of a breeze that just then sprung up. The Lexington left the Alert rapidly at first, but the latter having bent new sails, and being the faster vessel, in the course of three or four hours succeeded in getting alongside again, and of renewing the engagement. This second struggle lasted an hour, the fighting being principally

on one side. After the Lexington had thrown her last shot, had broken up and used all the iron that could be made available as substitutes, and had three of her officers and several of her men slain, besides many wounded, Capt. Johnston struck his colors. The first lieutenant, marine officer, and master of the Lexington were among the slain.

By this accident Dale became a prisoner for the third time. This occurred when he wanted just fifty days of being twenty-one years old. On this occasion, however, he escaped unhurt, though the combat had been both fierce and sanguinary. The prize was taken into Plymouth, and her officers, after undergoing a severe examination, in order to ascertain their birthplaces, were all thrown into Mill Prison, on a charge of high treason. Here they found the common men; the whole being doomed to a rigorous and painful confinement.

Either from policy or cupidity, the treatment received by the Americans, in this particular prison, was of a cruel and oppressive character. There is no apology for excessive rigor, or, indeed, for any constraint beyond that which is necessary to security, toward an uncondemned man. Viewed as mere prisoners of war, the Americans might claim the usual indulgence; viewed as subjects still to be tried, they were rightfully included in that healthful maxim of the law, which assumes that all are innocent until they are proved to be guilty. So severe were the privations of the Americans on this occasion, however, that, in pure hunger, they caught a stray dog one day, skinned, cooked and ate him, to satisfy their cravings for food. Their situation at length attracted the attention of the liberal;

statements of their wants were laid before the public; and an appeal was made to the humanity of the English nation. This is always an efficient mode of obtaining assistance, and the large sum of sixteen thousand pounds was soon raised; thereby relieving the wants of the sufferers, and effectually effacing the stain from the national escutcheon, by demonstrating that the sufferers found a generous sympathy in the breasts of the public. But man requires more than food and warmth. Although suffering no longer from actual want and brutal maltreatment, Dale and his companions pined for liberty—to be once more fighting the battles of their country. Seeing no hopes of an exchange, a large party of the prisoners determined to make an attempt at escape. A suitable place was selected, and a hole under a wall was commenced. The work required secrecy and time. The earth was removed, little by little, in the pockets of the captives, care being had to conceal the place, until a hole of sufficient size was made to permit the body of a man to pass through. It was a tedious process, for the only opportunity which occurred to empty their pockets, was while the Americans were exercising on the walls of their prison, for a short period of each day. By patience and perseverance, they accomplished their purpose, however, every hour dreading exposure and defeat.

When all was ready, Capt. Johnston, most of his officers, and several of his crew, or as many as were in the secret, passed through the hole, and escaped. This was in February, 1778. The party wandered about the country in company, and by night, for more than a week, suffering all sorts of privations, until it was

resolved to take the wiser course of separating. Dale, accompanied by one other, found his way to London, hotly pursued. At one time the two lay concealed under some straw in an out-house, while the premises were searched by those who were in quest of them. On reaching London, Dale and his companion immediately got on board a vessel about to sail for Dunkirk. A pressgang unluckily took this craft in its rounds, and suspecting the true objects of the fugitives, they were arrested, and, their characters being ascertained, they were sent back to Mill Prison in disgrace.

This was the commencement of a captivity far more tedious than the former. In the first place, they were condemned to forty days' confinement in the black hole, as the punishment for the late escape; and, released from this durance, they were deprived of many of their former indulgences. Dale himself took his revenge in singing "rebel songs," and paid a second visit to the black hole, as the penalty. This state of things, with alternations of favor and punishment, continued quite a year, when Dale, singly, succeeded in again effecting his great object of getting free.

The mode in which this second escape was made is known, but the manner by which he procured the means he refused to his dying day to disclose. At all events, he obtained a full suit of British uniform, attired in which, and seizing a favorable moment, he boldly walked past all the sentinels, and got off. That some one was connected with his escape who might suffer by his revelations is almost certain; and it is a trait in his character, worthy of notice, that he kept this secret, with scrupulous fidelity, for forty-seven years. It is



not known that he ever divulged it even to any individual of his own family.

Rendered wary by experience, Dale now proceeded with great address and caution. He probably had money as well as clothes. At all events, he went to London, found means to procure a passport, and left the country for France, unsuspected and undetected. On reaching a friendly soil, he hastened to l'Orient, and joined the force then equipping under Paul Jones, in his old rank of a master's mate. Here he was actively employed for some months, affording the commodore an opportunity to ascertain his true merits, when they met with something like their just reward. As Dale was now near twenty-three, and an accomplished seaman, Jones, after trying several less competent persons, procured a commission for him, from the commissioners, and made him the first lieutenant of his own ship, the justly celebrated *Bon Homme Richard*.

It is not our intention, in this article, to enter any farther into the incidents of this well known cruise, than is necessary to complete the present subject. Dale does not appear in any prominent situation, though always discharging the duties of his responsible station with skill and credit, until the squadron appeared off Leith, with the intention of seizing that town—the port of Edinburgh—and of laying it under contribution. On this occasion, our lieutenant was selected to command the boats that were to land, a high compliment to so young a man, as coming from one of the character of Paul Jones. Every thing was ready, Dale had received his final orders, and was in the very act of proceeding to the ship's side to enter his boat, when a heavy squall

struck the vessels, and induced an order for the men to come on deck, and assist in shortening sail. The vessels were compelled to bear up before it, to save their spars; this carried them out of the frith; and, a gale succeeding, the enterprise was necessarily abandoned. This gale proved so heavy, that one of the prizes actually foundered.

This attempt of Jones', while it is admitted to have greatly alarmed the coast, has often been pronounced rash and inconsiderate. Such was not the opinion of Dale. A man of singular moderation in his modes of thinking, and totally without bravado, it was his conviction that the effort would have been crowned with success. He assured the writer, years after the occurrence, that he was about to embark in the expedition with feelings of high confidence, and that he believed nothing but the inopportune intervention of the squall stood between Jones and a triumphant *coup de main*.

A few days later, Jones made a secret proposal to his officers, which some affirm was to burn the shipping at North Shields, but which the commanders of two of his vessels strenuously opposed, in consequence of which the project was abandoned. The commodore himself, in speaking of the manner in which this and other similar propositions were received by his subordinates, extolled the ardor invariably manifested by the young men, among whom Dale was one of the foremost. Had it rested with them, the attempts at least would all have been made.

On the 19th September occurred the celebrated battle between the *Serapis* and the *Bon Homme Richard*. As the proper place to enter fully into the details of

that murderous combat will be in the biography of Jones, we shall confine ourselves at present to incidents with which the subject of this memoir was more immediately connected.

The *Bon Homme Richard* had finally sailed on this cruise with only two proper sea-lieutenants on board her. There was a third officer of the name of Lunt, who has been indifferently called a lieutenant and the sailing-master, but who properly filled the latter station. This gentleman had separated from the ship in a fog, on the coast of Ireland, while in the pursuit of some deserters, and never rejoined the squadron. Another person of the same name, and a distant relative of the master, was the second lieutenant. He was sent in a pilot-boat, accompanied by a midshipman and several men, to capture a vessel in sight, before Jones made the Baltic fleet coming round Flamborough Head. This party was not able to return to the *Bon Homme Richard*, until after the battle had terminated. In consequence of these two circumstances, each so novel in itself, the American frigate fought this bloody and arduous combat with only one officer on board her, of the rank of a sea-lieutenant, who was Dale. This is the reason why the latter is so often mentioned as *the* lieutenant of the *Bon Homme Richard*, during that memorable fight. The fact rendered his duties more arduous and diversified, and entitles him to the greater credit for their proper performance. Both the Lunts, however, appear to have been seamen of merit, and subsequently did good service. They were natives of New England.

Dale was stationed on the gun-deck, where of course he commanded in chief, though it appears that his pro-

per personal division was the forward guns. Until the ships got foul of each other, this brought him particularly into the hottest of the work ; the *Serapis* keeping much on the bows, or ahead of the *Bon Homme Richard*. It is known that Jones was much pleased with his deportment, which, in truth, was every way worthy of his own. When the alarm was given that the ship was sinking, Dale went below himself to ascertain the real state of the water, and his confident and fearless report cheered the men to renewed exertions. Shortly after, the supply of powder was stopped, when our lieutenant again quitted his quarters to inquire into the cause. On reaching the magazine passage he was told by the sentinels that they had closed the ingress, on account of a great number of strange and foreign faces that they saw around them. On further inquiry, Dale discovered that the master at arms, of his own head, had let loose all the prisoners—more than a hundred in number—under the belief that the ship was sinking. Dale soon saw the danger which might ensue, but finding the English much alarmed at the supposed condition of the ship, he succeeded in mustering them, and setting them at work at the pumps, where, by their exertions, they probably prevented the apprehended calamity. For some time, at the close of the action, all his guns being rendered useless, Dale was employed principally in this important service. There is no question that without some such succor, the *Richard* would have gone down much earlier than she did. It is a singular feature of this every way extraordinary battle, that here were Englishmen, zealously employed in aiding the efforts of their

enemies, under the cool control of a collected and observant officer.

At length the cheerful intelligence was received that the enemy had struck. Dale went on deck, and immediately demanded Jones' permission to take possession of the prize. It was granted, and had he never manifested any other act of personal intrepidity, his promptitude on this occasion, and the manner in which he went to work, to attain his purpose, would have shown him to be a man above personal considerations, when duty or honor pointed out his course. The main-yard of the *Serapis* was hanging a-cock-bill, over the side of the American ship. The brace was shot away, and the pendant hung within reach. Seizing the latter, Dale literally swung himself off, and alighted alone on the quarter-deck of the *Serapis*. Here he found no one but the brave Pierson, who had struck his own flag; but the men below were still ignorant of the act. We may form an opinion of the risk that the young man ran, in thus boarding his enemy at night, and in the confusion of such a combat, for the English were still firing below, by the fact that Mr. Mayrant, a young man of South Carolina, and a midshipman of the *Bon Homme Richard*, who led a party after the lieutenant, was actually run through the thigh by a boarding pike, and by the hands of a man in the waist below.

The first act of Dale, on getting on the quarter-deck of the *Serapis*, was to direct her captain to go on board the American ship. While thus employed, the English first lieutenant came up from below, and finding that the Americans had ceased their fire, he demanded

if they had struck. "No, sir," answered Dale, "it is this ship that has struck, and you are my prisoner." An appeal to Capt. Pierson confirming this, the English lieutenant offered to go below and silence the remaining guns of the *Serapis*. To this Dale objected, and had both the officers passed on board the *Bon Homme Richard*. In a short time, the English below were sent from their guns, and full possession was obtained of the prize.

As more men were soon sent from the *Bon Homme Richard*, the two ships were now separated, the *Richard* making sail, and Jones ordering Dale to follow with the prize. A sense of fatigue had come over the latter, in consequence of the reaction of so much excitement and so great exertions, and he took a seat on the binnacle. Here he issued an order to brace the head yards aback, and to put the helm down. Wondering that the ship did not pay off, he directed that the wheelropes should be examined. It was reported that they were not injured, and that the helm was hard down. Astonished to find the ship immovable under such circumstances, there being a light breeze, Dale sprang upon his feet, and then discovered, for the first time, that he had been severely wounded, by a splinter, in the foot and ankle. The hurt, now that he was no longer sustained by the excitement of battle, deprived him of the use of his leg, and he fell. Just at this moment, Mr. Lunt, the officer who had been absent in the pilot-boat, reached the *Richard*, and Dale was forced to give up to him the command of the prize. The cause of the *Serapis*' not minding her helm was the fact that Capt. Pierson had dropped an anchor under

foot when the two ships got foul; a circumstance of which the Americans were ignorant until this moment.

Dale was some time laid up with his wound, but he remained with Jones in his old station of first lieutenant, accompanying that officer, in the *Alliance*, from the Texel to l'Orient. In the controversy which ensued between the commodore and Landais, our lieutenant took sides warmly with the first, and even offered to head a party to recover the *Alliance*, by force. This measure not being resorted to, he remained with Jones, and finally sailed with him for America, as his first lieutenant, in the *Ariel* 20, a ship lent to the Americans, by the King of France.

The *Ariel* quitted port in October, 1780, but encountered a tremendous gale of wind off the Penmarks. Losing her masts, she was compelled to return to refit. On this occasion Dale, in his responsible situation of first lieutenant, showed all the coolness of his character, and the resources of a thorough seaman. The tempest was almost a hurricane, and of extraordinary violence. The *Ariel* sailed a second time about the commencement of the year 1781, and reached Philadelphia on the 18th February. During the passage home, she had a short action, in the night, with a heavy British letter-of-marque, that gave her name as the *Triumph*; and which ship is said to have struck, but to have made her escape by treachery. Jones, who was greedy of glory, even fancied that his enemy was a vessel of war, and that he had captured a cruiser of at least equal force. This was not Dale's impression. He spoke of the affair to the writer of this article, as one of no great moment, even questioning whether their

antagonist struck at all, giving it as his belief she was a quick-working and fast-sailing letter-of-marque. He distinctly stated that she got off by out-manceuvring the *Ariel*, which vessel was badly manned, and had an exceedingly mixed and disaffected crew. It is worthy of remark, that, while two articles, enumerating the services of Dale, have been written by gentlemen connected with himself, and possessing his confidence, neither mentions this affair; a proof, in itself, that Dale considered it one of little moment.

The account which Dale always gave of the meeting between the *Ariel* and *Triumph*—admitting such to have been the name of the English ship—so different from that which has found its way into various publications, on the representation of other actors in that affair, is illustrative of the character of the man. Simple of mind, totally without exaggeration, and a lover, as well as a practicer, of severe truth, he was one whose representations might be fully relied on. Even in his account of the extraordinary combat between the *Richard* and *Serapis*, he stripped the affair of all its romance, and of every thing that was wonderful; rendering the whole clear, simple and intelligible as his own thoughts. The only narratives of that battle, worthy of a seaman, have been written rigidly after his explanations, which leave it a bloody and murderous fight, but one wholly without the marvelous.

On his arrival at Philadelphia, after an absence of four years, more than one of which had been spent in prison, Dale was just twenty-four years and two months old. He was now regularly put on the list of lieutenants, by the marine committee of Congress; his



former authority proceeding from the agents of the government in Europe. It is owing to this circumstance that the register of government places him so low as a lieutenant. Dale now parted from Paul Jones, with whom he had served near two years; and that, too, in some of the most trying scenes of the latter's life. The commodore was anxious to take his favorite lieutenant with him to the *America* 74; but the latter declined the service, under the impression it would be a long time before the ship got to sea. He judged right, the *America* being transferred to the French in the end, and Jones himself never again sailing under the American flag.

The name of Dale will be inseparably connected with the battle of the *Richard* and *Serapis*. His prominent position and excellent conduct entitle him to this mark of distinction, and it says much for the superior, when it confers fame to have been "Paul Jones' first lieutenant." We smile, however, at the legends of the day, when we recall the account of the "Lieutenants Grubb" and other heroes of romance, who have been made to figure in the histories of that renowned combat, and place them in contrast with the truth-loving, sincere, moral and respectable subject of this memoir. The sword which Louis XVI. bestowed on Jones, for this victory, passed into the hands of Dale, and is now the property of a gallant son, a fitting mark of the service of the father, on the glorious occasion it commemorates.\*

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\* This sword has, quite recently, become the subject of public discussion, and of some private feeling, under circumstances not wholly without interest to the navy and the country. At page 63, vol. 2, of Mackenzie's *Life of Paul Jones*, is the following note, viz :

Dale was employed on board a schooner that was manned from the *Ariel*, after reaching Philadelphia, and sent down the Delaware to convoy certain public stores. The following June, he joined the *Trumbull*

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“This sword was sent by Jones’ heirs to his valued friend, Robert Morris, to whose favor he had owed his opportunities of distinguishing himself. Mr. Morris gave the sword to the navy of the United States. It was to be retained and worn by the senior officer, and transmitted at his death, to his successor. After passing through the hands of Commodore Barry, *and one or two other senior officers*, it came into possession of Commodore Dale, and now remains in his family, through some mistake in the nature of the bequest, which seems to require that it should either be restored to the navy in the person of its senior officer, or else revert to the heirs of Mr. Robert Morris, from one of whom the writer has received this information.”

That Captain Mackenzie has been correctly informed as to a portion of the foregoing statement, is as probable as it is certain he has been misled as to the remainder. It would have been more discreet, however, in a writer to have heard both sides, previously to laying such a statement before the world. A very little inquiry might have satisfied him that Commodore Dale could not have held any thing as the senior officer of the navy, since he never occupied that station. We believe the following will be found to be accurate.

Of the manner in which Commodore Barry became possessed of this sword we know nothing beyond report, and the statement of Captain Mackenzie. We understand that a female member of the Morris family gives a version of the affair like that published in the note we have quoted, but the accuracy of her recollections can hardly be put in opposition to the *acts* of such men as Barry and Dale.

The sword never passed through the hands “*of one or two other senior officers*,” as stated by Captain Mackenzie, at all. It was bequeathed by Commodore Barry to Commodore Dale, in his will, and in the following words, viz.

“Item, I give and bequeath to my good friend Captain Richard Dale, *my* gold-hilted sword, as a token of my esteem for him.”

28, Capt. Nicholson, as her first lieutenant. The Trumbull left the capes of the Delaware, on the 8th August, 1781, being chased off the land by three of the enemy's cruisers. The weather was squally, and

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We have carefully examined the will, inventory, &c., of Commodore Barry. The first is dated February 27, 1803; the will is proved and the inventory filed in the following September, in which month Commodore Barry died. Now Commodore Dale was not in the navy at all, when this sword was bequeathed to him, nor when he received it. Dale resigned in the autumn of 1802; and he never rose nearer to the head of the list of captains, than to be the third in rank; Barry, himself, and Samuel Nicholson, being his seniors, when he resigned.

The inventory of Commodore Barry's personal property is very minute, containing articles of a value as low as one dollar. It mentions *two* swords, both of which are specifically bequeathed—viz.: "*my* gold-hilted," and "*my* silver-hilted sword." No allusion is made in the will to any trust. Only these two swords were found among the assets, and each was delivered agreeably to the bequest. The gold-hilted sword was known in the family, as the "Paul Jones sword," and there is not the smallest doubt Commodore Barry intended to bequeath this particular sword, in full property, to Commodore Dale.

Let us next look to the probabilities of the case. The heirs of Paul Jones, who left no issue, gave the sword to Robert Morris, says Capt. Mackenzie, as a mark of gratitude. This may very well be true. But Mr. Morris "gave the sword to the navy of the United States," to be retained and worn by its senior officer. It would have been a more usual course to have lodged the sword in the Navy Department, had such been the intention. That Commodore Barry did not view *his* possession of the sword in this light, is clear enough by his will. He gave it, *without* restraint of any sort, to a friend who was not in the navy at all, and who never had been its senior officer. This he did, in full possession of his mind and powers, six months before he died, and under circumstances to render any misconception highly improbable. It may be added, that Miss Jeannette Taylor, Paul Jones' niece, in a written communication to the writer, affirms that information was

night set in dark. In endeavoring to avoid her pursuers, the Trumbull found herself alongside of the largest, a frigate of thirty-two guns, and an action was fought under the most unfavorable circumstances. The Trumbull's fore-topmast was hanging over, or rather through her fore-castle, her crew was disorganized, and the vessel herself in a state of no preparation for a conflict with an equal force; much less with that actually opposed to her. The officers made great exertions, and maintained an action of more than an hour, when the colors of the American ship were struck to the Iris 32, and Monk 18. The former of these vessels had been the American frigate Hancock, and the latter was subsequently captured in the Delaware, by Barney, in the Hyder Ally.

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given her brother, which went to satisfy him that Robert Morris, in his pecuniary difficulties, *sold* the sword to Barry. Of the fact, the writer professes to know no more than is here stated.

Can we find any motive for the bequest of Commodore Barry? It was not personal to himself, as the sword went out of his own family. The *other sword* he gave to a brother-in-law. "Paul Jones' sword" was bequeathed to a distinguished professional friend—to one who, of all others, next to Jones himself, had the best professional right to wear it—to "Paul Jones' first lieutenant." Commodore Dale did leave sons, and some in the navy; and the country will believe that the one who now owns the sword has as good a moral right to wear it, as the remote collaterals of Jones, and a much better right than the senior officer of the navy, on proof as vague as that offered. His *legal* right to the sword seems to be beyond dispute.

In the inventory of Commodore Barry's personals, this sword is thus mentioned, viz.:—"a very elegant gold-hilted sword—\$300." The other sword is thus mentioned, viz.:—"a handsome silver-hilted do., \$100." It is worthy of remark, that Miss Taylor says the sword cost 500 louis d'or. The \$300 may have been the sum Barry paid for it.

This was the fourth serious affair in which Dale had been engaged that war, and the fourth time he had been captured. As he was hurt also in this battle, it made the third of his wounds. His confinement, however, was short, and the treatment not a subject of complaint. He was taken into New York, paroled on Long Island, and exchanged in November.

No new service offering in a marine which, by this time, had lost most of its ships, Dale obtained a furlough, and joined a large letter-of-marque, called the *Queen of France*, that carried twelve guns, as her first officer. Soon after he was appointed to the command of the same vessel. In the spring of 1782, this ship, in company with several other letters-of-marque, sailed for France, making many captures by the way. The ship of Dale, however, parted from the fleet, and falling in with an English privateer of fourteen guns, a severe engagement followed, in which both parties were much cut up; they parted by mutual consent. Dale did not get back to Philadelphia until February of the succeeding year, or until about the time that peace was made.

In common with most of the officers of the navy, Lieutenant Dale was disbanded, as soon as the war ceased. He was now in the twenty-seventh year of his age, with a perfect knowledge of his profession, in which he had passed more than half his life, a high reputation for his rank, a courage that had often been tried, a body well scarred, a character beyond reproach, and not altogether without "money in his purse." Under the circumstances, he naturally determined to follow up his fortunes in the line in which he had commenced his career. He became part owner of a large

ship, and sailed in her for London, December, 1783, in the station of master. After this, he embarked successfully in the East India trade, in the same character, commanding several of the finest ships out of the country. In this manner he accumulated a respectable fortune, and began to take his place among the worthies of the land in a new character.

In September, 1791, Mr. Dale was married to Dorothy Crathorne, the daughter of another respectable ship-master of Philadelphia, and then a ward of Barry's. With this lady he passed the remainder of his days, she surviving him as his widow, and dying some years later than himself. No change in his pursuits occurred until 1794, when the new government commenced the organization of another marine, which has resulted in that which the country now possesses.

Dale was one of the six captains appointed under the law of 1794, that directed the construction of as many frigates, with a view to resist the aggressions of Algiers. Each of the new captains was ordered to superintend the construction of one of the frigates, and Dale, who was fifth in rank, was directed to assume the superintendence of the one laid down at Norfolk, virtually the place of his nativity. This ship was intended to be a frigate of the first class, but, by some mistake in her moulds, she proved in the end to be the smallest of the six vessels then built. It was the unfortunate Chesapeake, a vessel that never was in a situation to reflect much credit on the service. Her construction, however, was deferred, in consequence of an arrangement with Algiers, and her captain was put on furlough.

Dale now returned to the China trade, in which he

continued until the spring of 1798. The last vessel he commanded was called the *Ganges*. She was a fine, fast ship, and the state of our relations with France requiring a hurried armament, the government bought this vessel, in common with several others, put an armament of suitable guns in her, with a full crew, gave her to Dale, and ordered her on the coast as a regular cruiser.

In consequence of this arrangement, Capt. Dale was the first officer who ever got to sea under the pennant of the present navy. He sailed in May, 1798, and was followed by the *Constellation* and *Delaware* in a few days. The service of Dale in his new capacity was short, however, in consequence of some questions relating to rank. The captains appointed in 1794 claimed their old places, and, it being uncertain what might be the final decision of the government, as there were many aspirants, Dale declined serving until the matter was determined. In May, 1799, he sailed for Canton again, in command of a strong letter-of-marque, under a furlough. On his return from this voyage, he found his place on the list settled according to his own views of justice and honor, and reported himself for service. Nothing offered, however, until the difficulties with France were arranged; but, in May, 1801, he was ordered to take command of a squadron of observation about to be sent to the Mediterranean.

Dale now hoisted his broad pennant, for the first and only time, and assumed the title by which he was known for the rest of his days. He was in the prime of life, being in his forty-fifth year, of an active, manly frame, and had every prospect before him of a long and honorable service. The ships put under his orders were the



President 44, Capt. James Barron; Philadelphia 38, Capt. S. Barron; Essex 32, Capt. William Bainbridge; and Enterprise 12, Lieut. Com. Sterrett. A better appointed, or a better commanded force, probably never sailed from America. But there was little to do, under the timid policy and defective laws of the day. War was not supposed to exist, although hostilities did; and cruisers were sent into foreign seas with crews shipped for a period that would scarcely allow of a vessel's being got into proper order.

The squadron sailed June 1st, 1801, and reached Gibraltar July 1st. The Philadelphia blockaded the Tripolitan admiral, with two cruisers, in Gibraltar, while the other vessels went aloft. A sharp action occurred between the Enterprise and a Tripolitan of equal force, in which the latter was compelled to submit, but was allowed to go into her own port again, for want of legal authority to detain her. Dale appeared off Tripoli, endeavored to negotiate about an exchange of prisoners, and did blockade the port; but his orders fettered him in a way to prevent any serious enterprises. In a word, no circumstances occurred to allow the commodore to show his true character, except as it was manifested in his humanity, prudence and dignity. As a superior, he obtained the profound respect of all under his orders, and to this day his name is mentioned with regard by those who then served under him. It is thought that this squadron did much toward establishing the high discipline of the marine. In one instance only had Dale an opportunity of manifesting his high personal and professional qualities. The President struck a rock, in quitting Port Mahon, and for some



hours she was thought to be in imminent danger of foundering. Dale assumed the command, and one of his lieutenants, himself subsequently a flag officer of rare seamanship and merit, has often recounted to the writer his admiration of the commodore's coolness, judgment, and nerve, on so trying an occasion. The ship was carried to Toulon, blowing a gale, and, on examination, it was found that she was only saved from destruction by the skilful manner in which the wood ends had been secured.

The vigilance of Dale was so great, however, and his dispositions so skilful, that the Tripolitans made no captures while he commanded in those seas. In March, 1802, he sailed for home, under his orders, reaching Hampton Roads in April, after a cruise of about ten months. The succeeding autumn, Com. Dale received an order to hold himself in readiness to resume the command from which he had just returned. Ever ready to serve his country, when it could be done with honor, he would cheerfully have made his preparations accordingly, but, by the order itself, he ascertained that he was to be sent out without a captain in his own ship. This, agreeably to the notions he entertained, was a descent in the scale of rank, and he declined serving on such terms. There being no alternative between obedience and resignation, he chose the latter, and quitted the navy. At this time, he was the third captain on the list, and it is no more than justice to say, that he stood second to no other in the public estimation.

Dale never went to sea again. Enjoying an ample fortune, and possessing the esteem of all who knew him, he commanded the respect of those with whom he

differed in opinion touching the question which drove him from the navy. With the latter he never quarreled, for, at the proper period, he gave to it his two eldest sons. To the last he retained his interest in its success, and his care of mariners, in general, extended far beyond the interests of this life.

Many years previously to his death, Com. Dale entered into full communion with the Protestant Episcopal church, of which he proved a consistent and pious member. Under the newly awakened feelings which induced this step, he was the originator of a Mariner's Church, in Philadelphia, attending it in person, every Sunday afternoon, for a long succession of years. He was as free with his purse, too, as with his time; and his charities, though properly concealed, were believed to be large and discriminating. With some it may be deemed a matter of moment, with all it should be a proof of the estimation in which Dale was held by certainly a very respectable part of his fellow citizens, that he was named to be the first president of the Washington Benevolent Society; an association that soon degenerated to serve the ends of party politics, whatever may have been the design that influenced the few with which it originated.

The evening of the life of Dale was singularly peaceful and happy. It was as calm as its morning had been tempestuous. It is true he had to weep for the loss of his first-born son, a noble youth, who died of wounds received in the action between his old ship, the *President*, and a British squadron; but he had given the young man to his country, and knew how to bear up under the privation. He died, himself, in the seventieth

year of his age, in his dwelling at Philadelphia, February 26, 1826; departing in peace with God and man, as he fondly trusted himself, and as those who survive have every reason to hope.

By his marriage with Miss Crathorne, Com. Dale had several children, five of whom lived to become men and women, viz.: three sons and two daughters. Of the former, Richard, the eldest, fell at an early age, a midshipman on board the *President*. John Montgomery, the second, is now a commander in the navy, having served with Warrington, in the last English war. This gentleman is married to a lady of the well known family of Willing. Edward Crathorne, the youngest son, is a merchant of Philadelphia. He is married, and has children. The eldest daughter, Sarah, married T. M'Kean Pettit, Esq., a judge of the District Court, in Philadelphia, and is dead, leaving issue. Elizabeth, the youngest, is the wife of Com. George Campbell Read, of the navy, and has no issue.

In considering the character of Dale, we are struck with its simple modesty and frank sincerity, quite as much as with its more brilliant qualities. His courage and constancy were of the highest order, rendering him always equal to the most critical duties, and never wearying in their performance. Such a man is perfectly free from all exaggeration. As he was not afraid to act when his cooler judgment approved, he had no distrusts to overcome ere he could forbear, as prudence dictated. Jones found him a man ready and willing to second all his boldest and most hazardous attempts, so long as reason showed the probabilities of success; but the deed done, none more thoroughly stripped it of

all false coloring, or viewed it in a truer light, than he who had risked his life in aiding to achieve it.

The person of Dale was in harmony with his moral qualities. It was manly, seaman-like, and of singularly respectable bearing. Simplicity, good faith, truth and courage were imprinted on his countenance, which all who were thrown into his company soon discovered was no more than the mirror of his mind. The navy has had more brilliant intellects, officers of profounder mental attainments, and of higher natural gifts, but it has had few leaders of cooler judgment, sounder discretion, more inflexible justice, or indomitable resolution. He was of a nature, an experience, and a professional skill to command respect and to inspire confidence, tributes that were cheerfully paid by all who served under his orders. The writer of this article has had extensive opportunities of hearing character discussed among the sea-officers of his country; few escape criticism of some sort or other, for their professional acts, and fewer still, as men; yet he cannot recall a single instance in which he has ever heard a whisper of complaint against the public or private career of Richard Dale. This total exemption from the usual fortunes of the race, may in part be owing to the shortness of the latter's service in the present marine, and to the limited acquaintance of his contemporaries; but it is difficult to believe that it is not chiefly to be ascribed to the thoroughly seaman-like character of the officer, and to the perfect truth and sterling probity of the man.











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